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## Voters weary of more investigations as impeachment ramps up

By SARA BURNETT  
Associated Press

**FISHERS, Ind. (AP)** — As Democrats' impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump intensifies, Mark Stenske feels like he's seen this movie before, and the storyline is getting old. First, there was the nearly two-year investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 election and Trump's possible role in it. Then came the accusations against Trump's pick for the Supreme Court, Brett Kavanaugh, and contentious hearings before a Senate committee. Now it's questions about Trump's dealings with Ukraine's president and whether that should lead to Trump's removal from office.

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Randall Scott discusses the impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump while sitting in a park in the Nickel Plate District, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Fishers, Ind.

Associated Press

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# U.S. pulling out of northern Syria; full withdrawal possible

By **ROBERT BURNS**

**AP National Security Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The United States appears to be heading toward a full military withdrawal from Syria amid growing chaos, cries of betrayal and signs that Turkey's invasion could fuel a broader war.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Sunday that President Donald Trump had directed U.S. troops in northern Syria to begin pulling out "as safely and quickly as possible." He did not say Trump ordered troops to leave Syria, but that seemed like the next step in a combat zone growing more unstable by the hour. Esper, interviewed on two TV news shows, said the administration was considering its options.

"We have American forces likely caught between two opposing advancing armies and it's a very untenable situation," Esper said. This seemed likely to herald the end of a five-year effort to partner with Syrian Kurdish and Arab fighters to ensure a lasting defeat of the Islamic State group. Hundreds of IS supporters escaped a holding camp amid clashes between invading Turkish-led forces and Kurdish fighters, and analysts said an IS resurgence seemed more likely, just months after Trump declared the extremists defeated.

The U.S. has had about 1,000 troops in northeastern Syria allied with the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces to combat IS. The Pentagon previously had pulled about 30 of these troops from the Turkish attack zone along the border. With an escalation of violence, a widening of the Turkish incursion and the prospect of a deepening conflict, all U.S. forces along the border will now follow that move. It was unclear where they would go. The Pentagon chief did not say U.S. troops are leaving Syria entirely. The only other U.S. presence in Syria is at Tanf garrison, near Syria's eastern border with Jordan. The U.S. and coalition troops there are



In this Aug. 28, 2019, file photo, Secretary of Defense Mark Esper speaks to reporters during a briefing at the Pentagon.

not involved in the Kurd mission, and so it seems highly unlikely the 1,000 being moved from the north would go to Tanf.

Critics say the U.S. has betrayed the Kurds by pulling back in the face of Turkey's invasion, but Esper said the administration was left with little choice once President Recep Tayyip Erdogan told Trump a week ago that he was going ahead with a military offensive. Esper said the Kurds have been good partners, "but at the same time, we didn't sign up to fight the Turks on their behalf." The Kurds then turned to the Syrian government and Russia for military assistance, further complicating the battlefield.

The prospect of enhancing the Syrian government's position on the battlefield and inviting Russia to get more directly involved is seen by Trump's critics as a major mistake. But he tweeted that it shouldn't matter.

"Others may want to come in and fight for one side or the other," he wrote. "Let them!"

New Jersey Sen. Bob Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said Trump is weakening America. "To be clear, this administration's chaotic and haphazard approach to policy by tweet is endangering the lives of U.S. troops and

civilians," Menendez said in a statement. "The only beneficiaries of this action are ISIS, Iran and Russia."

The fast-moving developments were a further unraveling of U.S. counterterrorism efforts in Syria, and they highlighted an extraordinary breakdown in relations between the United States and Turkey, NATO allies for decades. Turkish troops have often fought alongside American troops, including in the Korean War and in Afghanistan.

Asked whether he thought Turkey would deliberately attack American troops in Syria, Esper said, "I don't know whether they would or wouldn't."

He cited an incident on Friday in which a small number of U.S. troops fell under artillery fire at an observation post in the north. Esper called that an example of "indiscriminate fire" coming close to Americans, adding it was unclear whether that was an accident.

Esper disputed the notion that the U.S. could have stopped Turkey from invading in the first place. He said Erdogan had made clear he was going to launch his incursion "regardless of what we did."

Strongly critical of the Turks, Esper said "the arc of their behavior over the past several years has been terrible." He added: "I mean,

they are spinning out of the Western orbit, if you will. We see them purchasing Russian arms, cuddling up to President Putin. We see them doing all these things that, frankly, concern us."

The chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., said the U.S. and its NATO partners should consider expelling Turkey from the alliance. "How do you have a NATO ally who's in cahoots with the Russians, when the Russians are the adversaries of NATO?"

In explaining Trump's decision to withdraw from northern Syria, Esper cited two weekend developments. "In the last 24 hours, we learned that they

(the Turks) likely intend to expand their attack further south than originally planned — and to the west," he said.

The U.S. also has come to believe that the Kurds are attempting to "cut a deal" with the Syrian army and Russia to counter the invading Turks, he said. As a result, Trump "directed that we begin a deliberate withdrawal of forces from northern Syria," Esper said.

Trump, in a tweet Sunday, said: "Very smart not to be involved in the intense fighting along the Turkish Border, for a change. Those that mistakenly got us into the Middle East Wars are still pushing to fight. They have no idea what a bad decision they have made. Why are they not asking for a Declaration of War?"

Esper said he would not discuss a timeline for the U.S. pullback, but said it would be done "as safely and quickly as possible."

The Pentagon had said before the operation began that the U.S. military would not support it, and the U.S. pulled about 30 special operations troops out of observation posts along the invasion route on the Syrian border to keep them out of harm's way. The Turkish offensive initially covered an area along the border about 125 kilometers (77 miles) wide and about 30 kilometers (19 miles) deep. Esper said it has since grown wider and deeper. □

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## Voters weary of more investigations as impeachment ramps up

Continued from Front

"I think they wanted to do it all along, and they're just looking for another way, another avenue," Stenske, a 55-year-old Trump supporter, said of the impeachment proceedings as he walked his dog through a suburban Indianapolis park last week. "I think it's kind of a ploy to help keep the pressure on him and muddy his campaign, his chances to win in 2020."

Polling finds that support for the inquiry has grown since House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., announced the start of the investigation last month following a whistleblower complaint. But what those numbers don't show is the sense of fatigue among some Americans — a factor that could be significant as Democrats leading the inquiry debate how to proceed with an election year approaching.

It's a feeling shared by people on both sides.

For Trump supporters such as Stenske, the impeachment inquiry is more of the same from obstructionist Democrats still bitter about the 2016 election. Those who want Trump gone say it's tough to feel hopeful after watching him flout the rules and spew divisive rhetoric for almost a full term — and get away with all of it. "Impeachment in general has been depressing because it's sad that it's taken this long," said Megan Gettelfinger, 33, a preschool teacher and mother of two who moved

to Fishers from Indianapolis almost three years ago. The question about how to move forward with impeachment is of particular concern to both parties in places such as Fishers, one of the country's fastest-growing suburbs. The community has more than doubled in population since 2000, to just over 90,000 people. Companies have located to the area, and young families have been drawn to its good schools, entertainment and acres and acres of green space. The boom in Fishers and the surrounding region has changed the face of Indiana's 5th Congressional District, a once reliably Republican area that backed Trump by nearly 12 percentage points in 2016. The increased number of college-educated, more liberal residents has given Democrats hope that they may pick up a seat here in 2020, when GOP Rep. Susan Brooks is retiring.

Democrat Joe Donnelly narrowly won the district in 2018, even as he lost his Senate reelection bid statewide, and Democrats think the area looks a lot like the suburban districts that helped them win control of the House during last year's midterm elections. Trump should find plenty of ardent defenders here — people like Stenske, who voted for Trump in 2016 and thinks he's doing a "great job" as president despite what he sees as Democrats' relentless efforts to sabotage him. But at a park in the heart of Fishers' Sunblest neighborhood, an

upper middle-class area of young families and two-story homes, there were signs of problems for Trump and the GOP. For every supporter of the president, it was easy to find someone — most of them women — eager for his time in office to end.

"I think that what happened is impeachable," she said. "I also think that at this point anyone who doesn't support him is now jumping on 'This is how we can impeach him. This is our path to get this done to get him out of office.'" □



Mark Stenske walks his dog, Leo, as he discusses the impeachment inquiry into President Donald Trump while walking in a park, Wednesday, Oct. 9, 2019, in Fishers, Ind.

Associated Press



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# Hunter Biden to step down from Chinese board

By STEVE PEOPLES

AP National Political Writer  
NEW YORK (AP) —

Facing intense scrutiny from President Donald Trump and his Republican allies, Hunter Biden said Sunday he will step down from the board of directors of a Chinese-backed private equity firm at the end of the month as part of a pledge not to work on behalf of any foreign-owned companies should his father win the presidency.

Biden, the 49-year-old son of Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, revealed his plan in an internet post written by his attorney, George Mesires, who outlined a defense of the younger Biden's work in Ukraine and China, which has emerged as one of Trump's chief lines of attack against Hunter's father despite no proof of impropriety.

"Hunter makes the following commitment: Under a Biden Administration, Hunter will readily comply with any and all guidelines or standards a President Biden may issue to address



In this Jan. 30, 2010, file photo, Vice President Joe Biden, left, with his son Hunter, right, at the Duke Georgetown NCAA college basketball game in Washington.

purported conflicts of interest, or the appearance of such conflicts, including any restrictions related to overseas business interests. In any event, Hunter will agree not to serve on boards of, or work on behalf of, foreign owned companies," Mesires wrote. He continued: "He will continue to keep his father

personally uninvolved in his business affairs, while availing himself as necessary and appropriate to the Office of the White House Counsel to help inform his application of the Biden Administration's guidelines or standards to his business decision-making."

Joe Biden, speaking to reporters after a union forum

Associated Press

in suburban Des Moines, Iowa, said his son did not discuss that decision with him before posting the statement.

"No one has asserted my son did a single thing wrong," Biden added, pounding his finger into the podium, "except a lying president."

And Biden promised to bar his family members from occupying any office within the White House and said they won't "sit in meetings as if they are a Cabinet member." That was a jab at Trump, who taps daughter Ivanka and her husband, Jared Kushner, as advisers. Biden did not say if his pledge meant that Jill Biden, his wife, would not get the office traditionally assigned to first ladies, should he win.

He further vowed that no one in his family will have "any business relationship with anyone that relates to a foreign corporation or foreign country."

The White House released a rough transcript of a call in which Trump asks Ukraine's new president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, to probe Biden's family and Ukraine's role in the 2016 election that put Trump in office. Trump has also encouraged China to dig into Hunter Biden's work in that country, asserting without evidence that earned \$1.5 billion from a "sweetheart" business deal

there. The president's personal attorney, Rudy Giuliani, is also under increasing scrutiny for his efforts to dig into Hunter Biden's business background.

Late last week, two businessmen involved in Giuliani's efforts to investigate Hunter Biden's dealings in Ukraine were charged with federal campaign finance violations.

Still, Republicans reacted to news of Hunter Biden's decision to step away from the Chinese-backed BHR Equity Investment Fund Management Co. with deep skepticism.

"I think this is just another way to save a flailing campaign that's going down," Georgia Rep. Doug Collins, the top Republican on the House Judiciary Committee, said on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures." "He knows he's in trouble and this is just another way to try and detract attention

On the same show, White House counselor Kellyanne Conway said Hunter Biden "should have done this quite a while ago."

Mesires noted repeatedly that there is no evidence of wrongdoing against Hunter Biden, despite intensifying attacks from Trump before the 2020 election.

"Despite extensive scrutiny, at no time has any law enforcement agency, either domestic or foreign, alleged that Hunter engaged in wrongdoing at any point during his five-year term," Mesires said in his Sunday post of Biden's experience in Ukraine.

The attorney wrote that Hunter Biden worked as an unpaid board member for BHR Equity Investment Fund Management Co. "based on his interest in seeking ways to bring Chinese capital to international markets."

"To date, Hunter has not received any compensation for being on BHR's board of directors," Mesires said. "He has not received any return on his investment; there have been no distributions to BHR shareholders since Hunter obtained his equity interest." □

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## New Orleans hotel collapse: Search on for a missing worker

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Rescue crews on Sunday sought to find a worker missing in the rubble of a New Orleans hotel that partially collapsed while under construction, proceeding with caution because the dangerous of working in the unstable building, authorities said.

Officials declined to say if they have any indication whether the missing worker is alive after Saturday's collapse. New Orleans Fire Chief Tim McConnell said they are treating their work as a rescue mission until they have evidence the missing person is dead along with two other people killed when a large part of the Hard Rock Hotel project crashed down near the city's historic French Quarter. "Safety is the No. 1 thing. The last thing you want to do when you are trying to rescue somebody is lose someone else," McConnell said at a news conference Sunday.

Several floors of the hotel toppled down Saturday amid blinding dust and flying debris. WWL-TV obtained a viewer's dramatic video of upper floors collapsing Saturday before one side of the building crashed to the street.

New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell told media outlets later Sunday that the body of one of the two dead has been recovered and the coroner's office is working to identify the victim.

Thirty people were injured. Only one remains in the hospital. The mayor visited the man, who had surgery for a leg injury.

"He told me it could have

been worse. He wanted to make sure his co-workers were safe. He was envisioning the two who were on the floor with him," Cantrell said. Crews on Sunday were assembling a 220,000-pound (99,800-kilogram) crane driven into the city overnight to begin the delicate process of removing the large amount of fallen debris, McConnell said.

The project's contractor, Citadel Builders LLC, was flying in engineers from Europe to help crews remove debris without risking the life of the missing person or nearby buildings and aid in the investigation, officials said. Neither Citadel Builders nor emergency officials have commented on any potential cause of the building collapse.

The new Hard Rock Hotel was under construction at the corner of Rampart Street and Canal Street, a broad boulevard just outside the French Quarter that is lined with restaurants hotels and retailers. Canal, which carries six lanes of traffic divided by a wide median where streetcars roll, separates the Quarter from the city's main business district.

Officials warned massive disruptions in the area will likely last for weeks. Reports said about 100 residents in the mandatory evacuation zone have been displaced from their homes. And some debris from the building fell on the roof of the Saenger Theatre. Cantrell said the exact damage to the theater has not been determined, but productions of "Wicked" have been can-

celed through the end of its run next weekend. She urged patience because it could take weeks or even months to clean up the area.

"This structure is not stable. We want people to stay away from the area. How we touch it — it just matters," the mayor said. □



Debris hangs on the side of the building after a large portion of a hotel under construction suddenly collapsed in New Orleans on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019.

Associated Press

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## In or out? Court case on job bias casts pall on LGBT fests

By **JEFF McMILLAN**  
Associated Press

**PHILADELPHIA (AP)** — National Coming Out Day festivities were tempered this year by anxiety that some LGBT folk may have to go back into the closet so they can make a living, depending on what the Supreme Court decides about workplace discrimination law. But the mere fact that words like "transgender" are being uttered before the nation's highest court gives some supporters of LGBT workplace rights hope that the pendulum will swing in their favor.

"I want all members of our community to feel supported by the government, and often for a lot of us and a lot of friends of mine, it's the first time that they feel represented," said Jessica Goldberg, a bisexual senior at the University of Colorado Denver.

Still, for many, the arguments showed the continuing relevance of National Coming Out Day, first observed in 1988 and marked every Oct. 11, though observances happen over several days. That includes Philadelphia's annual OutFest, held Sunday this year and billed as the largest National Coming Out Day event.

Coming Out Day and, by extension, events like OutFest aim to show that coming out of the closet helps individuals and the larger community win visibility and acceptance.



**A person in a unicorn costume walks among others in attendance at Philadelphia OutFest, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019, in Philadelphia.**

As music echoed in the packed streets of Philadelphia's Gayborhood and smoke from food carts hung overhead, Priscilla Gonzalez waited for friends on a stoop and pondered the timing of the Supreme Court arguments — and what she sees as a nefarious "military tactic" of dividing Republican Party opponents to weaken them.

"It's true that we are focused on trying to protect our group," said Gonzalez, a New York City resident attending her first OutFest. "Because we feel so threatened, we start to divide more, and I think that divi-

sion brings disruptions."

Emotionally, the victory for LGBT marriage equality was "huge," said Susan Horowitz, publisher and editor of *Between the Lines*, an LGBT newspaper in Michigan. But the workplace discrimination case, with its legal ramifications, is bigger, she said.

"You can get married one day and be fired tomorrow if you put your spouse's picture on your desk," Horowitz said.

But some of the language thrown around in the arguments before the Supreme Court last week about whether the 1964 Civil

Rights Act protects LGBT people from employment discrimination — including a question by conservative Chief Justice John Roberts that appeared to show confusion about gender transitions, and off-topic questions about bathroom use by liberal Justices Sonia Sotomayor and Ruth Bader Ginsburg — shows there is a long way to go, said Shannon Minter, a transgender man who is the legal director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights.

President Donald Trump's attempt to ban transgender people from military service, and the backlash

to it, has helped educate people, and some of the questioning felt like "the justices had not caught up with that reality," Minter said, adding it felt like a throwback to a prior era.

"It was a wake-up call that the court is not always completely in sync with where the public is," he said. "I hope between now and the time of the decision that gap will close."

The court is expected to rule by the beginning of June — which is also LGBT Pride Month, potentially bookending the court's considerations with gay rights observances.

Kyla Hines — assistant director of the LGBTQ Student Resource Center for the University of Colorado Denver, Metropolitan State University of Denver and the Community College of Denver — hopes that people who are out or on the verge of coming out can find that courage despite anxiety over the impending Supreme Court decision.

"I definitely see a lot of weight and heaviness in the community, on our campus and in our office," Hines said. "We really want to view this time as a celebration."

Missy Stowe, attending Philadelphia OutFest, echoed that, while noting that as a pansexual woman working for an LGBTQ-owned prosthetics company, she is fortunate the case is unlikely to harm her, whatever the outcome. □





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## Family seeks answers after police kill Texas woman at home

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP) — A white police officer who killed a black woman inside her Texas home while responding to a neighbor's call about an open front door "didn't have time to perceive a threat" before he opened fire, an attorney for the woman's family said.

"You didn't hear the officer shout, 'Gun, gun, gun,'" attorney Lee Merritt said after viewing video taken from a Fort Worth officer's bodycam during Saturday's shooting of Atatiana Jefferson, 28. "He didn't have time to perceive a threat. That's murder."

Her family told KXAS television that Jefferson was watching her 8-year-old nephew when she was killed early Saturday.

The Fort Worth Police Department said in a statement that officers saw someone near a window inside the home and that one of them drew his duty weapon and fired after "perceiving a threat." The video released by police shows two officers searching the home from the outside with flashlights before one shouts, "Put your hands up, show me your hands." One shot is then fired through a window. The officer does not identify himself as police in the video.

"It's another one of those situations where the people that are supposed to protect us are actually not here to protect us," said Jefferson's sister, Amber Carr. "You know, you want to see justice, but justice don't bring my sister back," she said.

An aunt, Venitta Body, said the family does not understand why Jefferson was killed.

"It's like from the moment

we got the call, it's been more and more inconceivable and more confusing. And there has nothing been done in order to take away that confusion," Body said. Police said the officer, who's been on the force since April 2018, is on administrative leave pending the outcome of an investigation. His name was not released.

James Smith, who called a police non-emergency number about the open door, told reporters he was just trying to be a good neighbor.

"I'm shaken. I'm mad. I'm upset. And I feel it's partly my fault," Smith said. "If I had never dialed the police department, she'd still be alive."

Smith said Jefferson and her nephew typically lived with an older woman, who's been in the hospital. "It makes you not want to call the police department," he said.

Merritt said Jefferson's family expects "a thorough and expedient investigation."

The Fort Worth Police Department said it released bodycam footage soon after the shooting to provide transparency, but that any "camera footage inside the residence" could not be distributed due to state law. However, the bodycam video released to media included blurred still frames showing a gun inside a bedroom at the home. It's unclear if the firearm was found near the woman, and police have not said that the officer who shot her thought she had a gun. The police statement released Saturday said only that officers who entered the residence after the shooting found a firearm. Police did not

immediately respond to a message seeking comment Sunday.

Democratic presidential candidate Bernie Sanders on Sunday called on the Justice Department to investigate.

"The killings of unarmed Black Americans have got to end," Sanders tweeted. "Atatiana Jefferson should be alive." □



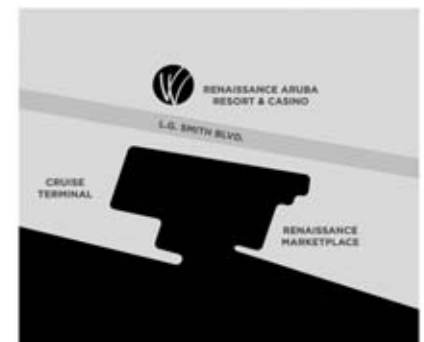
In this Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019, image made from a body camera video released by the Fort Worth Police Department an officer shines a flashlight into a window in Fort Worth, Texas.

Associated Press



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## Tunisia polls suggest conservative professor wins election

By **BOUAZZA BEN BOUAZZA**

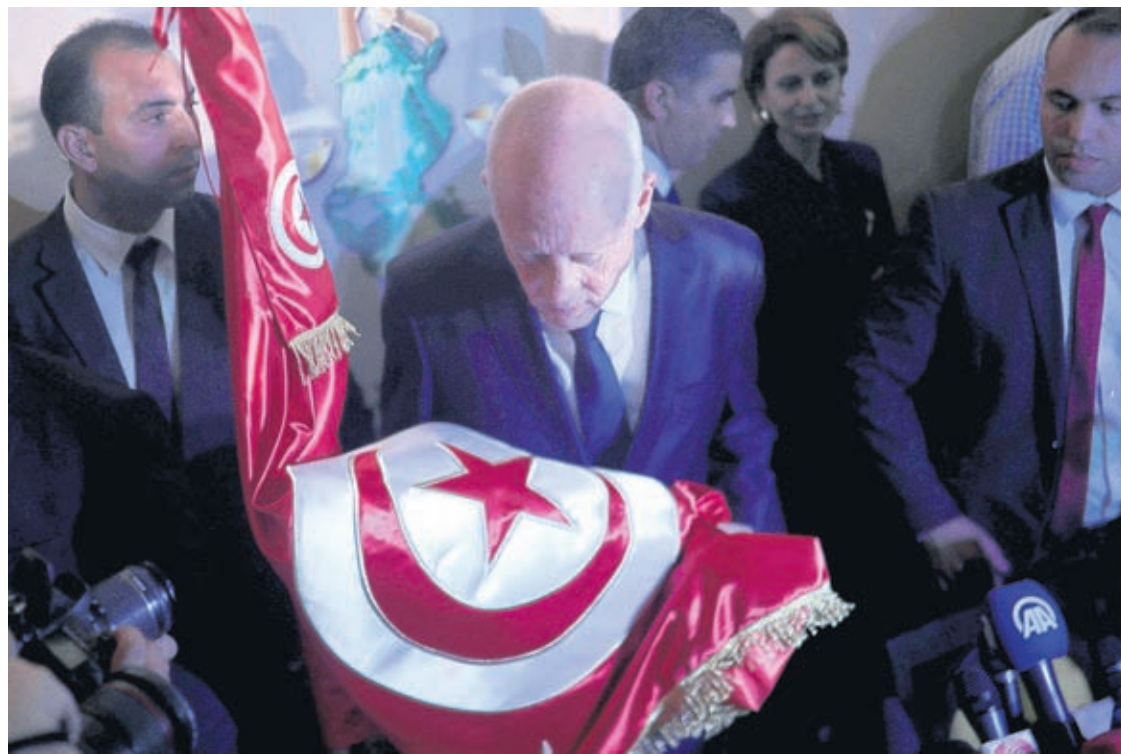
**Associated Press**

**TUNIS, Tunisia (AP)** — A conservative, Islamist-backed law professor looked set to assume Tunisia's presidency after polling agencies suggested he overwhelmingly won Sunday's runoff election in the country that unleashed the Arab Spring pro-democracy uprisings. Kais Saied's supporters exploded with joy, celebrating on the main boulevard of Tunis, and Saied thanked his supporters and announced plans to travel to neighboring Libya and Algeria and to champion the Palestinian cause.

Official results of the top-sy-turvy election — in which Saied's rival, Nabil Karoui, spent most of the campaign behind bars — weren't expected until Tuesday.

The winner inherits a North African country struggling to create jobs, revive tourism and overcome sporadic extremist violence — but proud of its still-budding democracy. This is only Tunisia's second free presidential election.

Polls carried in Tunisian media by Sigma Conseil and Emhrod Consulting forecast that Saied would come out on top with between 72% and 77% of the votes. Media magnate Karoui was projected to win between



**Tunisian law professor Kais Saied prepares to kiss the national flag Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019 in Tunis.**

**Associated Press**

23% and 27%. The polling agencies questioned several thousand people in person in various constituencies on voting day. Emhrod Consulting said its poll had a margin of error of two percentage points, while Sigma Conseil said its margin of error was 1.5 points.

Saied, 61, is an independent outsider but is supported by moderate Islamist party Ennahdha, which won last week's parliamentary elections. He promised to overturn Tunisia's governing structure, handing more power to young people and local governments.

"A new page in history is turning," he told reporters in Tunis after the polls came out. A former constitutional law professor, Saied promised to uphold Tunisia's post-revolution constitution, saying, "No one will be above the law."

Despite the backing of Ennahdha, he described himself as politically neutral.

"I am independent and will remain so until the end of my life," he said during the campaign.

Firmly conservative, Saied opposes equal inheritance rights for daughters and

sons, arguing that the hot-button issue is decided by the Quran, the Muslim holy book.

With poker-straight posture, a blank visage and a staccato speaking style — in literary Arabic inaccessible to many in the rural interior — he has been assigned the nickname "Robocop." A 2013 TV show with a hidden camera, and Saied as guest, created a fake earthquake in the studio. Things banged, the table shook violently, along with Saied's chair. He sat impassively, at one point only looking at his watch.

During the presidential race, Saied shunned political rallies, preferring to run his campaign from discreet locations like cafes, or let young people rally support. He enjoyed an enthusiastic youth campaign machine that cheered him on Twitter, and backing from the No. 1 and No. 3 parties in the new parliament: the moderate Islamist party Ennahdha and the Al Karama Coalition, led by a radical Islamist lawyer.

Voters lined up even before polls opened in the capital, Tunis, choosing between two candidates who have never held political office.

The only thing Saied and Karoui had in common was their outsider status. Both rose to the runoff on the disenchantment of Tunisians, particularly young people and the poor, who feel the governing class hasn't fulfilled the promises of the 2011 "jasmine revolution" that unleashed revolts around the Arab world.

"I just hope that everything that will happen in the next five years will be better for Tunisia," said voter Elfi Zaouarda, casting a ballot in Tunis.

More than 100,000 police, soldiers and security forces guarded polling stations, and thousands of local and foreign observers monitored the vote. □

## Brexit divorce talks between UK and EU go down to the wire

By **JILL LAWLESS**

**Associated Press**

**LONDON (AP)** — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was to brief his Cabinet Sunday on the progress of last-minute Brexit talks with the European Union, amid signs of progress but also deep-seated skepticism about the chances of a deal.

Britain is due to leave the 28-nation bloc on Oct. 31, and attempts to find a deal have foundered over plans for keeping an open border between EU member Ireland and the U.K.'s Northern Ireland.

The challenge of maintaining an invisible bor-



**Britain's Prime Minister Boris Johnson gestures as he participates in an art class at St Mary's and All Saints Primary School in Beaconsfield, England, Friday, Oct. 11, 2019.**

**Associated Press**

der — something that underpinned both the local economy and the region's peace deal — has domi-

nated Brexit discussions for three years, ever since U.K. voters chose in 2016 to leave the EU.

But negotiations intensified last week after Johnson and Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said they could see a "pathway" to a divorce agreement that avoids a no-deal Brexit, something economists say would hurt both the U.K. and EU economies.

Both sides say substantial gaps remain and it's unclear whether they can be bridged in time for an orderly British departure at the end of this month. A crucial EU summit, the last scheduled chance to strike a deal, begins Thursday.

If a Brexit deal is reached, it still needs to be approved

by both British and European parliaments. Many British lawmakers — on both pro-Brexit and pro-EU sides of the debate — remain unconvinced.

Lawmaker Nigel Dodds of Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party — which props up Johnson's Conservative minority government — has rejected one suggested compromise, in which Northern Ireland stayed in a customs partnership with the EU in order to remove the need for border checks. The DUP strongly opposes any measures that would treat Northern Ireland differently than the rest of the U.K. □





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## Post-war Liberians are demanding better mental health care

By J. PAYE-LAYLEH

Associated Press

MONROVIA, Liberia (AP)

— More than a decade after back-to-back civil wars ravaged Liberia its people still await justice for countless abuses, and many say the lack of accountability is worsening a mental health crisis.

The frustration soared when President George Weah recently indicated there was no need for his government to set up a war crimes court in the West African nation where the conflicts killed a quarter-million people. "Why now?" he repeated in an address to the United Nations annual gathering of world leaders last month. The impatience with that attitude boiled over last month when hundreds of people stormed Liberia's legislature with a petition asking the government for more mental health support. They said they represented some half-million people who have received mental health services over the years via a charity, the U.S.-based Carter Center. Such private aid is not enough to assure that every Liberian receives assistance, they said.

"Mental health care continues to be seriously sidelined," said Bill Ballah, a spokesman for the group. "Each of us needs good mental health to ... pursue our life goals and meet our responsibilities as responsible citizens."

Critics say Liberia's president is not interested in creating a war crimes court because his political support base includes



In this Oct. 9, 2019, photo, a mentally ill woman sits on the streets in Monrovia, Liberia.

some elements who committed atrocities. Weah has rejected that accusation and his supporters dismiss it as untrue. In addition to those suffering from trauma caused by the civil wars from 1989 to 2003, thousands of Liberians are trying to recover from the world's deadliest Ebola outbreak that killed more than 4,000 people in the country from 2014-2016.

More than 20% of Liberia's post-war population has mental health issues including post-traumatic stress disorder, the World Health Organization said in 2016. But the country has just a couple of psychiatrists for a population of nearly 5 million.

Until the arrival of a Nigerian psychiatrist three years ago, Dr. Benjamin Harris had been the only psychiatrist in Liberia for decades. About 70% of students Harris interviewed near the end of the civil wars said they had seen people killed or

tortured. About 60% said they had lost confidence in human beings and society. "This can have a severe consequence on one's mental function," he told The Associated Press. The need for mental health care in Liberia is so great and complicated that no government has been able to tackle the issue, and none has taken the initiative, Harris said.

Government authorities acknowledge the mental health problem is enormous but blame the country's inability to raise enough revenue to address such issues. The chairman of the senate committee on health and a former health minister, Dr. Peter Coleman, said the funding allotted to the health sector in the annual budget is negligible because there

are competing priorities. "When it comes to mental health right now, it's collaborations with agencies such as the Carter Center that is helping us to at least do the rudimentary things in mental health," he said. Dr. David Henderson, chairman of the psychiatry department at Boston University's medical school, said mental health could be tackled more rigorously in places like Liberia if global health funding paid more attention to psychiatry. If those resources were provided, "we can really build capacity very quickly."

He cited the success story of Ethiopia, which went from just three psychiatrists to about 100 over 15 years. For now Liberia has just one overcrowded and underfunded mental health hospital, an annex of the John F. Kennedy Memorial Medical Center in the capital, Monrovia. Patients are charged the equivalent of \$10 for 21 days of treatment, a cost many cannot afford. □



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## Iran offers warning after mysterious tanker attack

By **AMIR VAHDAT**  
Associated Press

**TEHRAN, Iran (AP)** — Iran's president warned Sunday it would be "a big mistake" to think his country won't respond to threats after a mysterious attack on one of its oil tankers. Hassan Rouhani's remarks came as Pakistan's prime minister was visiting Iran in an effort to ease tensions between Tehran and Saudi Arabia. Imran Khan is planning to visit Saudi Arabia later this week. His mediation efforts come just days after Iran said missiles struck an Iranian oil tanker traveling through the Red Sea near Saudi Arabia, which has denied it was behind the incident. "If a country thinks that it can create instability in



**Thousands of people protest on Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019 in Berlin, Germany, against rising anti-Semitism, days after a man attacked a synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle.**

Associated Press

the region without getting a response, that would be a sheer mistake," Rouhani said, without pinning the blame on any specific country. Tensions in the region have

world powers last year.

The tensions culminated in a Sept. 14 attack on key Saudi oil infrastructure that halved the kingdom's oil production.

The U.S. blames Iran for the attack, something Tehran denies. Yemen's Houthi rebels, whom the kingdom has been fighting in a yearslong war, claimed the attack, though analysts say the missiles used wouldn't have the range to reach the target from Yemen.

"We do not want a conflict between Saudi Arabia and Iran. We recognize that it's a complex issue, we recognize that, but we feel that this can be resolved through dialogue," Khan said. "But what should never happen is war between Saudi Arabia and Iran."

Pakistan is closely allied with Saudi Arabia but has tried to maintain a diplo-

matic balancing act between Riyadh and Tehran. Saudi Arabia meanwhile denied it was behind Friday's incident involving the Iranian oil tanker, with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Adel al-Jubeir telling journalists: "Let's wait and find out what happened before we jump to conclusions." The attack on the tanker has yet to be corroborated.

Khan also met Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who said that while Iran has not initiated any war, "if one starts a war against Iran, he will surely regret it." Khamenei also said unspecified countries in the region were "under the will of the United States" and called for an end to the war in Yemen, according to remarks published on the supreme leader's official website. □

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## Thousands in Berlin protest against anti-Semitism



**Thousands of people protest on Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019 in Berlin, Germany, against rising anti-Semitism, days after a man attacked a synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle.**

Associated Press

By **KIRSTEN GRIESHABER**  
Associated Press

**BERLIN (AP)** — Thousands of people in Berlin protested against anti-Semitism on Sunday, days after a man attacked a synagogue in the eastern German city of Halle.

About 10,000 people participated in the march through the German capital. Several thousand others protested Saturday in other cities including Hamburg and Marburg. Many Germans are in shock over Wednesday's

attack in which two people were killed outside the synagogue and in a kebab shop. The attack has renewed concerns about rising far-right extremism and questions about the slow police response.

The 27-year-old, heavily armed suspect identified as Stephan B. tried but failed to enter the house of worship on Yom Kippur, Judaism's holiest day. The suspect, who livestreamed his attack online, has been charged with two counts of murder and nine of attempted murder.

On Sunday, people started their march at a symbolic landmark, Berlin's Bebelplatz square, where the Nazis burnt thousands of books by Jews, Communist and other opponents, weeks after Adolf Hitler took power in 1933. □



## China, Nepal sign deals for connectivity, security and trade

By ROSHAN SEDHAI

Associated Press

KATHMANDU, Nepal (AP) — Nepal and China signed 20 agreements on Sunday, including one on a trans-Himalayan railway, as Chinese President Xi Jinping wrapped up a two-day visit to the Himalayan nation.

After talks in Kathmandu, Xi and Nepalese Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli witnessed the signing of 18 agreements and two letters of exchange in areas of connectivity, security, border management, trade, tourism and education.

Xi, who arrived Saturday from India after meeting Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, became the first Chinese president in more than two decades to visit Nepal.

One of the deals includes an understanding to start a feasibility study of a China-Nepal cross-border railway project being considered under an ambitious project that is a component of China's signature Belt and Road Initiative.

China is working to stretch out the Qinghai-Tibet railway up to Keirung, a border town less than 35 kilometers (22 miles) from Nepal, by 2020. Kathmandu, Nepal's capital, is around 70 kilometers (43 miles) from the border point.

A statement issued by Nepal's Ministry of Foreign Affairs made no mention of an extradition treaty that was expected to be high on the agenda of the meetings.

Nepalese officials earlier ruled out the possibility of any immediate agreement on the extradition issue. China has been pressing Nepal to sign the treaty for some years to improve the administration of border areas and fight against illegal border crossing and transnational crimes like banking fraud, trafficking and the smuggling of gold and wildlife parts.

India has extensive influence on Nepal's economy and politics, while China and Nepal share a border



Chinese President Xi Jinping, center attends a bilateral meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

covered with high mountain peaks.

Nepal is traditionally cautious in building relations with its bigger neighbors India and China.

Xi's visit and the subsequent deals could be seen as an important development between the two countries as India traditionally maintains close relations with Nepal for their shared religious, cultural and historical ties and a 1,751-kilometer (1,088-mile) border on three sides. Xi's visit also generated excitement in Nepal's tourism sector.

In an article published in Nepali media ahead of his visit, Xi described Nepal as the first South Asian country to be designated an approved destination for Chinese tourists and pledged China's support of Visit Nepal 2020, an ambitious plan unveiled by Oli's government to bring in 2 million foreign tourists in a year.

Kapil Shrestha, a political science professor at Nepal's Tribhuvan University, said Xi's visit is likely to pave ways for greater engagement between the two countries, and would check India's "high-handedness in Nepal's affairs."

"This visit will slightly curtail India's influence and force New Delhi to think twice before imposing an economic blockade like it did in 2015," Shrestha said. "For China, Nepal, with a favorable government in Kathmandu, is the easiest route to spread its tentacles in South Asia."

But Nepal's position on Ti-

bet remains an issue of concern. Shrestha said that in its pursuit to improve ties with China, Nepal should not compromise in its core values like democracy and

human rights, and protect the rights of Tibetan refugees.

"Nepal has symbiotic and organic relations with Tibet," he said. □

Associated Press

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# Indigenous leaders, officials head to Ecuador protest talks

By **MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN**  
**GONZALO SOLANO**  
**Associated Press**

**QUITO, Ecuador (AP)** — Residents of Ecuador's capital picked their way through piles of burnt tires and chunks of pavement Sunday as the government and indigenous protesters headed to negotiations aimed at defusing more than a week of demonstrations that have paralyzed the nation's economy.

Protests against a plan to remove fuel subsidies as part of an International Monetary Fund austerity package have left seven dead and halved oil production, forcing Ecuador to temporarily stop shipping its most important export. The United Nations and Ecuadorian Bishops' Conference said negotiations would begin at 3 p.m. local time (4 p.m. EDT) between President Lenín Moreno's government and the Confederation of Indigenous Nations, which has brought thousands of indigenous protesters to the capital and organized anti-austerity protests across the country, from the Andes high sierra to the Amazon rainforest.

The public ombudsman's office said Sunday that seven people had died in the protests, 1,340 had been hurt and 1,152 arrested. The government shortened



**Anti-government demonstrators man a barricade during clashes with the police, near the national assembly building in Quito, Ecuador, Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019.**

a 24-hour curfew imposed on Saturday, allowing people to move freely around the capital between 11 a.m. and 8 p.m. daily.

The protests have drawn in thousands of Ecuadorians from outside the indigenous minority and many said they would continue demonstrating despite the negotiations. On Sunday afternoon, hundreds of people defied the curfew and headed toward the main protest site, some carrying wooden poles. Police let them enter the park and surrounding area but searched people's bags and confiscated potential weapons.

Michael Limaico, a 35-year-

old unemployed sign-maker, stood on a corner in the Carcelen neighborhood near a line of burned tires that blocked one of the city main thoroughfares on Saturday. Limaico said that he and his wife had struggled for years to feed and house their three children, ages 9 to 15, with their earnings of about \$600 a month from odd jobs around northern Quito.

Then, prices of food and other basic goods rose sharply after Moreno removed fuel subsidies on Oct. 2. Limaico said it had become impossible to make ends meet, and he had been protesting for days with neighbors who have blocked Diego de Vazquez Avenue as it passes through Carcelen.

"This isn't a protest of thieves, of gangsters," he said. "This is the people, and we're fed up."

Demonstrations in Quito took three distinct forms on Saturday, the most tumultuous in 10 days of protests against Moreno's austerity measures. Thousands of indigenous people protested outside the National Assembly in the city center. Front-line troops of young people, both whites and mestizos from inside Quito and indigenous from the countryside, fought police with stones, Molotov cocktails and improvised mortars. Several dozen broke into the national comptroller office, smashing

windows and setting the building afire. Elsewhere in the city, groups of masked men attacked media offices, setting fires before they were driven off by police. Lastly, across Quito, groups of neighbors — indigenous, white and mixed, or mestizo — blocked streets, burned tires and banged pots and pans to protest Moreno's austerity package. Others, tired of the chaos, banged pots and pans to protest the demonstrations and call for a return to normality. "Every citizen that disagrees with government decisions can protest in the right way but let's not mix that up with vandalism and robbery," said James Baez, a 78-year-old retired employee of an American tire company. He said he supported Moreno and the decision to impose a curfew.

On Sunday morning, soldiers and had retaken control of the epicenter of the protests in Quito — the park and streets leading to the National Assembly and the national comptroller's office.

Moreno said the military would enforce the curfew in Quito and around critical infrastructure like power stations and hospitals in response to the day's violence. It was the first such action imposed since a series of coups in the 1960s and '70s, although there was little military or police presence on most Quito

streets Sunday morning and thousands of people were out walking, driving and trying to run errands like getting money from cash machines.

Moreno said his government would address some concerns of protesters, studying ways to ensure resources reach rural areas and offering compensation for those who lost earnings because of the recent upheaval. "We'll negotiate with those who have decided to do so," Moreno said in remarks broadcast on radio and television. "The process is moving forward and I hope to give you good news soon, because different organizations and sectors have confirmed their willingness to talk."

Moreno said the masked protesters had nothing to do with the thousands of indigenous Ecuadorians who have protested for more than a week over a sudden rise in fuel prices as part of an International Monetary Fund-backed austerity package. He blamed the violence on drug traffickers, organized crime and followers of former President Rafael Correa, who has denied allegations he is trying to topple Moreno's government.

Moreno served Correa as vice president before he became president and the two men went through a bitter split as Moreno pushed to curb public debt amassed on Correa's watch.

Ecuador, a former OPEC member, was left deeply in debt by a decade of high-spending governance and the oil price drop. Moreno is raising taxes, liberalizing labor laws and cutting public spending in order to win more than \$4 billion in emergency financing from the IMF.

As part of that plan, Moreno eliminated subsidies on the price of fuel on Oct. 2, driving the most popular variety of gasoline from \$1.85 to \$2.39 a gallon and diesel from \$1.03 to \$2.30. Panic and speculation sent prices soaring, with costs of some products doubling or more. □

## Thousands join protest called by Haiti's art community

**Associated Press**  
**PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)**

— Thousands of Haitians have joined a protest in the capital called by the art community to demand President Jovenel Moïse resign, increasing pressure on the embattled leader after nearly a month of marches that have shuttered schools and businesses.

Members of one art group wore what appeared to be diapers on their heads and held empty bowls, while other protesters chanted

slogans against Moïse, expressing anger over corruption, rising inflation and a lack of basic goods in the Western Hemisphere's poorest country.

"Not our president" and "We want a different Haiti," read signs in the protest in Port-au-Prince.

The demonstration comes amid a spike in violence in Haiti's capital and surrounding communities as protests that have caused nearly 20 deaths and almost 200 injuries paralyze the country. □



## LOCAL



## Aruba Art Circle presents: Luis Quintero at Cas di Cultura Sunday at 11am

By Clyde Harms  
ORANJESTAD —Tim Panting once wrote this in *Classical Guitar Magazine* of London: “The first thing that impressed me was the obvious force in the fingers of Quintero. His performance was always firm and full of musical contrasts. The passages of velocity were always performed with profound confidence and one could perceive that Quintero felt profoundly what he was interpreting. A performer overflowed with virtuosity”. That is also the impression that Luis Quintero has left on me to this date. And now you can experience this too as Quintero will perform here in Aruba.

A child prodigy, Quintero started his musical education at the “Escuela Superior de Música Jose Angel Lamas” in Caracas, Venezuela. He is the only Latin American who did his post-graduate studies at the Julliard School of Music in New York with a full scholarship from that institute.

Quintero was the winner of the Antonio Lauro Biennial Prize for Professional Interpreters, and of the Rodrigo Riviera Concourse. He has received many awards and recognitions: Order of “José Felix Ribas in the 1st Class”; medal and diploma of the Fundación Ven-

ezuela Positiva” and many more.

I met him for the first time in January 2006 when he performed in the Ballroom of the Marriott Hotel Aruba. At that time he was already well known in Aruba as he had given concerts and had conducted workshops here. I had the pleasure of attending many of his concerts the following years in Maracaibo, Venezuela where he used to perform for the Festival Nuevo Mundo.

Playing his beloved guitar in July as part of the 2019 Aruba Symphony Festival he charmed us at Casibari Café, at Paseo Herencia and on board the Free-winds. I now look forward to attend his matinée concert in Cas di Cultura on Sunday, October 20.

The guitar was developed in the 16th century as accompaniment to the Gypsy/Flamenco music in Spain, but in Sunday's concert at Cas di Cultura Quintero will majestically demonstrate how the guitar has developed into a musical instrument for which many famous composers from all over the world score. His program contains works by the French Armenian Laurent Boutros; the Hungarian János Gáspár Mertz;



the Brazilian João Pernambuco; the Venezuelans Ignacio Figueredo and Antonio Lauro; and works of his

own. The concert will be at Cas di Cultura in a matinée concert on Sunday Oc-

tober 20 starting at 11am. Tickets are only obtainable before the concert at Cas di Cultura. See you there! □





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## 'Trick or Treat' at Renaissance Marketplace: Joy of Halloween for our children

**ORANJESTAD —** Halloween is knocking on the door and Renaissance Marketplace wants to make sure the children do not miss out on the fun. The celebration is the perfect time to express your creativity and the mall will organize a very 'spooky' festivity. The decoration will include scary sounds and smoke effects. You may also be surprised by walking dead alias zombies.

There is all opportunity to take a picture with your fav zombie and of course what would a Halloween celebration be without the traditional 'trick or treat'? All parents are invited to bring their children on Sunday, October 27th to pick

up the 'treat' This is the opportunity for our visitors to have their children mingle with our local little ones. Between 5 and 8 p.m. the fun is on.

### Win a price

Renaissance Marketplace is also offering special games for the children where they can win nice prices. There will also be face painting, a magic show and a dance show. The mall is completely in Halloween zone with the zombies, ghosts and much more. Join in on the Horror Fest and enjoy the excitement while at the same time you can shop around and have a bite. Don't miss it, this is too scary to let go! □



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## Couple Overboard in Love: Take the Plunge with Jolly Pirates

**PALM BEACH** — Jolly Pirates proved the perfect reception venue for Sabrina and Sasha. From the moment guests stepped aboard the gleaming teak decks of the 85-foot schooner they realized Aruba's magnificent coastline and the Caribbean Sea could not be a more ideal setting. Guests were all aboard for a magi-

cal Aruba wedding and agreed Jolly Pirates was the ideal choice for excitement and romance.

"It was a wedding like no other," said the overjoyed couple. "Every detail of our party was magnificent! It couldn't have gone any better, and the Jolly Pirates' staff was stellar in ev-

ery way. Our guests are still talking about the delicious food and the onboard merriment surrounded by incredible views". The Jolly Pirates crew turned flips - literally - to ensure the entire wedding party enjoyed every aspect of their seafaring celebration. "It was obvious we'd made the perfect choice of reception



venue!" Celebratory champagne toasts were made while family and friends delighted in watching the groomsmen shed their formal wear for high-flying tumbles off the schooner's rope swing. Certainly not your everyday destination wedding reception!

The charming old-world schooner provided fabulous photo opportunities and everything went off without a hitch. Except for the couple that did get hitched as planned!

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## In love with Aruba

**PALM BEACH —** Recently, Kimberley Richardson of the Aruba Tourism Authority had the great pleasure to honor Aruba's loyal and friendly visitors as Distinguished Visitors of Aruba. The symbolic Distinguished Visitor certificate is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism, as a token of appreciation to guests who visit Aruba 10 years and more consecutively.

The honorees were Dennis and Kimberley Valor from New Jersey, USA.

This lovely couple stated that Aruba is and will always be their second home. They fell in love with the island the first time they came in 2000! They also stated that they love Aruba very much, especially for its year-round sunny weather, nice sandy beaches and picturesque sunsets, deli-



cious variety of foods, its rich culture, and Aruba's warm and friendly people.

Richardson together with the representatives of the Barceló Aruba, presented

the certificate to the honorees, handed over some presents and also thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination and as their home-away-from-home. □

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<p><b>Wednesday at 8:00pm</b></p> <p><b>Noche Latina</b></p>	<p><b>Sunday at 8:00pm</b></p> <p><b>Aruba Has Talent</b></p>
<p><b>Thursday at 8:00pm</b></p> <p><b>Circus Night</b></p>	<p><b>Every night at 7:30pm 8:30pm 9:30pm</b></p> <p><b>Liquid Firework Show</b></p>

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# Hotel Hustle

Column by: Shanella Pantophlet

## Influencers

One of the most interesting phenomena to come out of this technology crazed world are “influencers”. An influencer is a person who is famous on social media or have a big follower base for whatever reason. Usually they get paid for running content ads on their platforms. The reason I find influencers an interesting concept, is due to how many emails I receive from people who claim to be internet famous, looking for rooms.



Every email starts out the same with a subject line about exposure and then leads into an introduction about who they are, how many followers they have and their proposals for collaboration.

The proposal is where I usually delete the email or tell my colleagues to read through and then delete. Without fail it's always, “give me a free stay and I will promote your property through my social media.” Usually ending by it's a win-win for everyone. I do admire their temerity in asking for free accommodations, but the cons of such an arrangement outweigh the pros. At least for the resort.

Truth is though, it really isn't. Firstly, by agreeing to grant them a free stay it already provides a bias, because they now have an incentive to provide a positive review. Secondly, like most people I tend towards budget conscious, if this influencer I'm watching is staying for free

and getting everything paid for, they aren't providing me with information I can use. Lastly, there's no way to measure that their video of their free trip can or will increase traffic to your resort.

Let's be real though, the general audience for these social media superstars are not all financially capable of traveling as extensively as their favorite stars. It's a consideration that always plays a role in my decision as well. At the end of the day however our social media usually has a bigger following than these supposed stars.

To summarize, you've basically given away a room to an influencer, that you could have sold and made a profit on and there's no guarantee of return on investment. Beyond that you're also incurring costs by having to pay someone to clean that room, eating any taxes and fees associated with their stay and if

food is included your resort is also losing money there. Even worse, there's still a chance that the review given will be a negative one, because they expected the free ocean front full amenities suite and not your basic room with a garden or pool view.

Am I saying that I'd never welcome a collaboration with an influencer? No, but that would and should come in the form of them booking their own accommodations, experiencing the resort and island without bias and then reaching out to ask permission.

At least then they've had an experience that wasn't affected by the arrangements between them and the resort.

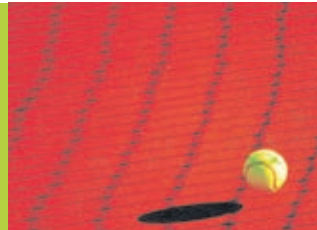
Their review will be honest and the relationship is mutually beneficial as resorts can comfortably use the honest reviews for their own social media promotions without selling a false narrative. □



Aruban born and bred Shanella Pantophlet is passionate about tourism. That is the world she studied and works in, so we might as well call her a specialist. Luckily for Aruba Today Shanella also loves to write. And together with the fact that the majority of our readers are tourists, we found ourselves a perfect combination for a column: Hotel Hustle.



# SPORTS



Gold medalist Simone Biles of the United States performs on the floor in the women's apparatus finals at the Gymnastics World Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

## Simone Biles sets all-time medal record at gymnastics worlds

By JAMES ELLINGWORTH

AP Sports Writer

STUTTGART, Germany (AP)

— Everyone counts Simone Biles' medals except Simone Biles.

Winning her 24th and 25th world championship medals in beam and floor Sunday put the United States gymnast top of the all-time medal charts for the championships.

Biles won five gold medals this week. If she can repeat that at next year's Olympics it would be a feat no female gymnast has managed at a single Games.

But for Biles, it's not about the statistics.

"I can't be more thrilled with the performance that I put out at this world championships," she said. The medal record? "I'm not a number person."

Aged 22, she's a hero to younger gymnasts who grew up watching her routines.

Continued on Page 23

## SKINS GAME



## McLaurin helps Redskins earn 1st win against Dolphins, 17-16

Washington Redskins tight end Jeremy Sprinkle (87) congratulates wide receiver Terry McLaurin (17) after McLaurin scored a touchdown, during the second half at an NFL football game against the Miami Dolphins, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019, in Miami Gardens, Fla.

Associated Press  
Page 20



## Lanto Griffin saves par on last hole to win Houston Open

HUMBLE, Texas (AP) — Six feet away from his first PGA Tour victory, Lanto Griffin never felt calmer.

It was only after his par putt fell into the middle of the cup Sunday in the Houston Open that the 31-year-old Griffin struggle to contain so many emotions.

He describes his parents as hippies and his childhood as flush with fun and love, short on cash. His father, who bought him a starter set of clubs even though no one in the family ever played golf, died when Griffin was 12. A local pro in Virginia, Steve Prater, gave him an honorary membership when Griffin's father died and continues as a coach and mentor.

"This is going to be a week that I'll never, never forget — regardless what happens the rest of my career," Griffin said. "I feel very fortunate beyond words."

Locked in a tight race on the back nine, Griffin took the lead with a 35-foot birdie putt on the 16th hole, and then won with that 6-footer for par, which gave him a 3-under 69 and a one-shot victory over Mark Hubbard and Scott Harrington.

All three were on the Korn Ferry Tour last year. None had ever won on the PGA Tour.

The victory sends Griffin to the Masters and the PGA Championship, gives him a two-year exemption and forces him to come up with a fresh set of goals for the rest of the year. Except for statistics that take a season to complete, he ticked off most of them in Houston. He won.

He played in a final group. He wanted to play in two majors.

"I'll check whatever I have off there and reevaluate after this week," Griffin said. Hubbard had the lead until he missed his only fairway of the final round on the par-5 15th, into the high grass of a hazard. He was able to chop out across the fairway into more thick grass, hit his third into a fairway bunker and missed an

8-foot par putt. Harrington, who took 16 years to reach the PGA Tour and gave up a year to stay with his wife as she battled cancer, birdied the 15th with a two-putt from 10 feet, hit his tee shot to 3 feet for birdie on the 16th and was tied for the lead until a three-putt from 45 feet up the ridge on the 17th hole.

Harrington missed a 15-foot birdie putt on the 18th and shot 67.

Hubbard had one last chance with a bold tee shot on the 18th, one of the toughest driving holes on the PGA Tour with water down the left side and a large bunker to the right. That set him up with a short iron to 25 feet, but his putt

to at least force a play-off stayed left. Hubbard closed with a 69. Griffin played away from the water on the 18th, knowing he could handle any shot from there because the pin was to the left. His approach was just on the green, 60 feet away, and it rolled 6 feet by. When he made the winner, he dropped his putter and raised both arms before covering his head.

"Just a childhood dream. That's what we all play for," he said.

He thought about the Masters and Maui, where the year starts for PGA Tour winners, the FedEx Cup play-offs. It was a lot to take in. "It's mind-boggling," he said. "Just didn't seem like it



Lanto Griffin hoists the Championship trophy during presentation ceremonies after winning the Houston Open golf tournament Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019, in Houston.

Associated Press

would ever happen, but at the same time, I believe in myself and I was extremely calm out there today. Just bizarre."

Griffin won on the Korn Ferry Tour last year and in 2017. He also won in Uruguay on the PGA Tour Latinoamérica in 2015 when he was trying to make his

way to the big leagues. His birdie on the 16th was his first since the eighth hole, and while Griffin missed birdie chances on both par 5s on the back nine, he also converted a 6-foot par save on the 14th hole and two-putted up a ridge on the 17th, making a 4-footer for par. □

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## Watson outduels Mahomes, leads Texans past Chiefs

By The Associated Press

**KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP)** — Deshaun Watson threw for 280 yards and a touchdown while running for two more, outdueling Chiefs counterpart Patrick Mahomes in a matchup of former first-round picks and leading the Houston Texans to a 31-24 victory over Kansas City on Sunday.

Carlos Hyde added 116 yards rushing and a touchdown against the team that traded him to Houston (4-2) before the start of the season. DeAndre Hopkins hauled in nine passes for 55 yards. None was bigger than his last, when the Texans star made a sliding grab on fourth-and-3 from the Kansas City 27 with just under 2 minutes to go. That allowed Houston to run out the clock and deal the Chiefs (4-2) their second consecutive loss — both at Arrowhead Stadium. Mahomes, who was selected two spots ahead of Watson in the 2017 draft, finished with 273 yards passing and three touchdowns, though he also threw his first interception of the season. Star wide receiver Tyreek Hill returned to action for the first time since Week 1, when he broke his collarbone, to catch five passes for 80 yards and two of the Chiefs' scores.

**SEAHAWKS 32, BROWNS 28 CLEVELAND (AP)** — Chris Carson scored on a 1-yard touchdown run with 3:30 left, Russell Wilson threw two TD passes and ran for one and Seattle rallied past mistake-prone Cleveland, improving to 3-0 on the road for the first time in 39 years.

The Seahawks (5-1) gave up touchdowns on Cleveland's first three possessions before storming back.

Wilson connected with Jaron Brown for two scores,



Houston Texans quarterback Deshaun Watson (4) scores a touchdown next to tight end Jordan Akins (88) during the first half of an NFL football game against the Kansas City Chiefs in Kansas City, Mo., Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

and Seattle's cool quarterback scampered 16 yards for a TD. The Seahawks last won their first three road games in 1980, when they went 4-12.

The Browns (2-4) were hurt by their own miscues. They couldn't overcome four turnovers, a blocked punt or quarterback Baker Mayfield's hip injury and fell to 0-3 at FirstEnergy Stadium. Mayfield threw three interceptions, raising his NFL-leading total to 11. Trying to bring the Browns back late, Mayfield, who went to the locker room in the third quarter to be evaluated, was picked off by Seattle's K.J. Wright with 2:41 remaining.

**SAINTS 13, JAGUARS 6**

**JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)** — Teddy Bridgewater found Jared Cook for a 4-yard touchdown early in the fourth quarter, and New Orleans held on to beat Jacksonville and improve to 4-0 without injured starter Drew Brees.

Coming off a 300-yard, four-touchdown perfor-

mance against Tampa Bay, Bridgewater was less effective against the Jaguars (2-4). But he did enough for New Orleans' defense.

Gardner Minshew was sacked twice, hurried often and threw his first interception as a starter. The rookie sensation completed 14 of 29 passes for 163 yards and was held without a touchdown for the first time this season. Bridgewater was 24 of 36 passing for 240 yards for the Saints (5-1). Michael Thomas had eight receptions for 89 yards, and Alvin Kamara finished with 31 yards rushing while playing through an ankle injury.

**VIKINGS 38, EAGLES 20**

**MINNEAPOLIS (AP)** — Kirk Cousins threw to Stefon Diggs for three of his four touchdowns, racking up a season-high 333 passing yards as Minnesota ravaged Philadelphia's secondary.

Diggs scored on plays in the first half that covered 51 and 62 yards, becoming the first player since Randy

Moss in 2000 to post two touchdown receptions of 50-plus yards in one game for the Vikings (4-2).

His most important catch came late in the third quarter, a double toe tap in the back of the end zone from 11 yards out that pushed the lead to 11 points after Carson Wentz and the Eagles (3-3) had pulled within 24-20 with 17 straight points. Cousins went 22 for 29 with one sack and one interception on a deflected ball. The Eagles have been badly missing starting cornerbacks Ronald Darby and Avonte Maddox, and Cousins took full advantage with a first half that looked at times like passing drills against the scout team.

**PANTHERS 37, BUCCANEERS 26**

**LONDON (AP)** — Christian McCaffrey scored two touchdowns and Carolina turned five interceptions by Jameis Winston into 17 points as the Panthers beat Tampa Bay.

After starting the season

with two straight losses with hobbled Cam Newton at quarterback, the Panthers (4-2) have been on a roll with Kyle Allen at quarterback thanks to McCaffrey's big plays and an opportunistic defense that had a franchise record-tying seven takeaways on the day. Both of those factors came up big on Carolina's first trip to London in front of a large contingent of Panthers fans for what was designated as a home game for the Bucs (2-4).

Winston did most of his damage after the game got out of hand late, throwing for 400 yards with a 10-yard TD pass to Cameron Brate in the fourth quarter that gave him 100 touchdown passes in his career.

**REDSKINS 17, DOLPHINS 16 MIAMI GARDENS, Fla. (AP)**

— Rookie Terry McLaurin caught two touchdown passes and Washington stopped Miami's two-point conversion attempt with 6 seconds left in a matchup between winless teams.

Adrian Peterson more than doubled his season rushing total with 118 yards for Bill Callahan in his first game as interim coach. Washington intercepted Josh Rosen twice and sacked him five times before he was benched at the start of the fourth quarter with the Dolphins trailing 17-3.

Rosen's replacement, Ryan Fitzpatrick, sparked a rally and led two touchdown drives, including a 75-yard march that began with 2:02 left. But after Fitzpatrick hit DeVante Parker for an 11-yard score to cut the deficit to one point, rookie coach Brian Flores decided to go for two.

Running back Kenyan Drake dropped Fitzpatrick's quick pass with several defenders between him and the goal line. □





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## Rockets focused on basketball after fallout from GM's tweet

By KRISTIE RIEKEN  
AP Sports Writer

**HOUSTON (AP)** — The Rockets are back home in Houston, looking to leave behind the distractions from their trip to Asia.

Their two games in Japan were overshadowed by the aftermath of a tweet by general manager Daryl Morey in support for anti-government protesters in Hong Kong, angering fans and officials in China.

In their first practice since returning, the Rockets insisted they wouldn't let the fallout distract them from preparing for the season. "Guys can handle it," coach Mike D'Antoni said. "We still got good work in. Everything's fine, but you know what happened (is) regrettable, and it happened, but as I said, our work will get done."

Veteran P.J. Tucker denied that dealing with this situation has been a distraction to this team trying to contend for its first title since winning back-to-back championships in 1994-95.

"Not really, honestly," he said. "This time of season, everybody's getting in shape, getting ready for the season, focusing in. So with all of the things that

go on in life, and whatever, this is still our job, so we still come in and do our job every single day."

The Rockets were in Hawaii on Oct. 4 to play a pre-season game against the Los Angeles Clippers on the first leg of a trip that included two games in Japan when Morey tweeted an image that said: "Fight For Freedom. Stand With Hong Kong." His tweet was in reference to pro-democracy demonstrations in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory that has been mired in escalating violence between protesters and law enforcement.

The tweet was deleted soon after it was posted, and Rockets owner and billionaire casino and restaurant owner Tilman Fertitta quickly rebuked his GM with a tweet saying that Morey does not speak for the team. He added: "Our presence in Tokyo is all about the promotion of the NBA internationally and we are NOT a political organization."

Despite the swift response from Fertitta, the damage was already done. Former Rockets star Yao Ming took offense to Morey's support for the anti-government



Houston Rockets' James Harden, left, and Russell Westbrook share a light moment during warmups for the team's NBA preseason basketball game against the Toronto Raptors Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019, in Saitama, near Tokyo.

protesters and as president of the Chinese Basketball Association, suspended its ties to the Rockets over the tweet.

Events in China promoting the Lakers-Nets series were canceled, NBA media partner Tencent said it was evaluating its plans to cover the league, and China state broadcaster CCTV did not air either preseason game.

The tweet also caused some Chinese corporations to suspend relationships with the NBA and it is unclear what can be done to mend the relationship.

D'Antoni was asked if there is anything the coaches and players can do to help repair things with China.

"We've just got to keep playing and keep trying to be good ambassadors for the game, that's all the

players can do," he said. "And then we'll let the NBA and the Houston Rockets sort things out."

Morey hasn't spoken publicly since the tweet, with his only comments on the issue coming in two more tweets on Oct. 6. In those tweets he did not apologize for his initial tweet but did say that his tweets "in no way represent the Rockets or the NBA." □

Associated Press

## Usyk dominant in heavyweight debut, wins by TKO

By PATRICK ROSE  
Associated Press

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Oleksandr Usyk did everything in his heavyweight debut with the exception of knocking down Chazz Witherspoon.

Usyk dominated, earning a technical knockout win over Witherspoon in the seventh round on Saturday night.

In his highly anticipated pro debut, Usyk (17-0) showed his dominance over Witherspoon in the third round, teeing off with an array of jabs. Usyk landed a series of combinations in the fourth.

Witherspoon spent most of the second half of the sixth round leaning on the ropes as Usyk had his way. Witherspoon (38-4)

showed a strong chin, never going down, but his corner saw enough and stopped the fight after the seventh round.

Usyk had no regrets about not putting Witherspoon on the canvas.

"I did what my trainer told me to do. I just follow their orders and that was to box. And I did box, but if I had the opportunity, I



Oleksandr Usyk, right, fights with Chazz Witherspoon during a heavyweight boxing bout Saturday, Oct. 12, 2019, in Chicago.

Associated Press

would take that opportunity," Usyk said. After dominating the

cruiserweight division, Usyk expects to jump into title fight contention. □



## Daniil Medvedev wins Shanghai Masters for fourth title of the year

By SANDRA HARWITT

Associated Press

**SHANGHAI (AP)** — Daniil Medvedev extended the form that made him the hottest player in men's tennis when he captured the Shanghai Masters title with a 6-4, 6-1 win over Alexander Zverev on Sunday.

The third-seeded Medvedev picked up his third title in six consecutive finals played since the tour returned to hard courts after Wimbledon in July. He also won the Masters 1000-level tournament in Cincinnati and the St. Petersburg trophy in that stretch. Last month, Medvedev also made it to his first Grand Slam final at the U.S. Open where he challenged Rafael Nadal through five sets before the Spaniard secured his career 19th Grand Slam trophy.

"It's something outrageous what I've done in the last few months," Medvedev said on the court after his win. "I wouldn't have believed it."

In the press conference, Medvedev tried to explain what has changed to improve his results.

"Something clicked in my game in USA," he said. "I



Daniil Medvedev of Russia poses with his winner's trophy after defeating Alexander Zverev of Germany in the men's final at the Shanghai Masters tennis tournament at Qizhong Forest Sports City Tennis Center in Shanghai, China, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

don't know why. I think it's just the hard work that I have been doing.

"But I started to understand even more about my game, even more I would say about my serve, about my volley, about everything, like kind of what do I have to do when?"

The 23-year-old Medvedev is currently 29-3 in matches played in the past six tournaments.

Medvedev leads the 2019 ATP Tour season in four categories. He's won the most matches at 59, won the most hard court matches at 46, won the most match-

es at Masters 1000 tournaments at 22, and reached the most finals at nine with four titles captured.

Medvedev and the 22-year-old Zverev are the youngest finalists at an ATP Masters 1000 event since a 22-year-old Novak Djokovic defeated a 23-year-old Gael Monfils at the 2009 Paris tournament.

The fifth-seeded Zverev had won all four of his previous encounters against Medvedev, but all of those matches were played prior to this year, which has seen the Russian become nearly invincible of late. □

## Just 15, Coco Gauff tops Jelena Ostapenko for 1st WTA singles title



In this Aug. 29, 2019, file photo, Coco Gauff, of the United States, celebrates after defeating Timea Babos, of Hungary, in the second round of the U.S. Open tennis tournament in New York.

Associated Press

**LINZ, Austria (AP)** — Coco Gauff is still just 15. She also is already the owner of a WTA singles title.

The American beat 2017 French Open champion

Jelena Ostapenko 6-3, 1-6, 6-2 in the final of the Upper Austria Ladies tournament Sunday, making Gauff the youngest winner of a singles trophy on the WTA tour

since 2004. "This is a special moment for me," Gauff said.

"I'm still overwhelmed and shocked," Gauff said, according to the WTA's website. "I guess it's crazy to say it's my first WTA title.

This was definitely not on the calendar at the beginning of the year, because I didn't think I'd have a chance to get in, and now I'm the champion, so it's crazy."

This week's run, which including a victory over Kiki Bertens for her initial top-10 win, was the latest impressive performance for Gauff, who is now expected to rise inside the top 75 when the new WTA rankings are released Monday. □



Pittsburgh Penguins' Marcus Pettersson (28), Brandon Tanev (13) and Teddy Blueger (53) celebrate with Zach Aston-Reese after Aston-Reese's goal against Winnipeg Jets goaltender Laurent Brossoit (30) during first-period NHL hockey game action in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

## Aston-Reese has 2 goals and assist, Penguins beat Jets 7-2

**WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP)** — Zach Aston-Reese, Sam Lafferty and Jake Guentzel each had two goals to lead the Pittsburgh Penguins to a 7-2 win over the Winnipeg Jets on Sunday night.

Dominik Simon also scored and Aston-Reese also had an assist for the Penguins. Tristan Jarry stopped 27 shots. Mathieu Perreault and Mark Scheifele had goals for the Jets, and Laurent Brossoit finished with 21 saves. Both teams were playing back-to-back games and lacked zip in the first period. Perreault scored the opener at 1:47 when a centering puck he flipped in front of the Pittsburgh net glanced off a defender's stick and past Jarry.

The celebration was short-lived as Aston-Reese tied it up a few minutes later when, as he was falling to the ice in front of the Winnipeg net, he slipped a loose rebound past Brossoit at 4:09 for his first goal of the season.

Guentzel scored on a power play at 7:50 of the second to give the Penguins the lead and then, just 41 seconds later, a puck bounced behind the net and back out right in front of Lafferty, who slammed it in to make it 3-1.

Scheifele narrowed it by backhanding a rebound past Jarry on a power play at the 10-minute mark but Simon restored the two-goal lead with 3 1/2 minutes left as his shot pinballed through traffic before ending up in the Jets' net. It was also his first of the season. The Jets seemed to find more steam at the start of the third after coach Paul Maurice made some line changes but couldn't turn things around, striking out on their fourth power play.

Instead, Lafferty scored again at 9:32 when his shot glanced off Winnipeg defenseman Anthony Bitetto's skate. Then Guentzel beat Brossoit for his second of the game and fourth of the season at with 8:20 left to make it 6-2.

Aston-Reese scored his second of the game short-handed on a breakaway just 7 seconds into a Winnipeg power play with 5:14 remaining.

NOTES: Winnipeg finished with a 29-28 advantage on shots on goal. ... The Jets had less trouble on their first meeting this season with the Penguins, walking away from PPG Paints Arena with a 4-1 win last Tuesday. ... Patrik Laine picked up an assist on Scheifele's goal but he couldn't score despite one great chance right in front of Jarry that went high. □





Brigid Kosgei of Kenya, poses with her time after winning the Women's Bank of America Chicago Marathon while setting a world record of 2:14:04, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019, in Chicago.

Associated Press

## Kenya's Brigid Kosgei sets world marathon record in Chicago

**CHICAGO (AP)** — Brigid Kosgei of Kenya won the Chicago Marathon on Sunday in 2 hours, 14 minutes, 4 seconds to break the world record in the event.

The 25-year-old Kosgei bested the previous mark of 2:15:25 set by Paula Radcliffe in London 16 years ago. Kosgei won in Chicago last year in 2:18:35.

"I'm feeling good and I am happy because I was not expected to run like this," Kosgei said.

Kosgei's run came little more than 24 hours after fellow Kenyan Eliud Kipchoge became the first man to run 26.2 miles in less than two hours, clocking 1:59:41 in Vienna. Unlike Kipchoge's performance, however, Kosgei's mark was set in an official race on a record-eligible course. Radcliffe first set a world record at Chicago in 2002 before besting her own mark a year later in London.

"It was 17 years ago exactly today that I set the first world record here in Chicago," said Radcliffe, who attended Sunday's race. "That was a special day for me today and it's a very special day for Brigid today."

Kosgei, who also won this

year's London Marathon in 2:18:20, set a fast early pace but slowed a bit after the halfway mark. She was waving to the crowd as she approached the finish line, nearly seven minutes ahead of runners following her.

Ababel Yeshaneh and Gelete Burka, both of Ethiopia, finished second and third. Yeshaneh's time was 2:20:51 and Burka's was 2:20:55.

Lawrence Cherono sprinted across the finish in the men's race to beat Dejene Debela by one second. The Kenyan Cherono finished in 2:05:45, with Ethiopia's Debela two strides behind. Asefa Mengstu, also of Kenya, came in third three seconds behind Cherono. "All of a sudden when we reach 41 kilometer, the (other runners) were not going again," Cherono said. "I decided to kick and felt I was still having enough energy to sprint. I tried my luck and it worked."

Cherono won the Boston Marathon in April in 2:07:57. Sunday's win marked his eighth career marathon victory.

Defending champion Mo Farah, who set a European record here last year, finished in ninth in 2:09:58. □



Gold medalist Simone Biles of the United States listens to the national anthem during the award ceremony for the floor exercise in the women's apparatus finals at the Gymnastics World Championships in Stuttgart, Germany, Sunday, Oct. 13, 2019.

Associated Press

## Simone Biles

Continued from Page 18

"I'm second in the world after Simone Biles, and she's obviously so amazing. And to be second is super crazy," the 16-year-old U.S. gymnast Sunisa Lee said after taking silver behind Biles in Sunday's floor exercise. "I don't know how she's been doing this for so long."

Biles' 24th medal came on the beam, breaking a tie for 23 with Belarusian gymnast Vitaly Scherbo. Biles scored 15.066 after a near-flawless routine, opting for a simpler dismount than the double-double she performed earlier in the championships.

That dismount is a sore point for Biles, who introduced the double-double to competition this season and had the skill officially named after her at the worlds — there are four Biles skills now. She feels the International Gymnastics Federation didn't reward it with a high enough difficulty rating.

"It's not worth the one-tenth (extra difficulty point). I'm sorry, it's just not," she said.

When her score was announced, guaranteeing the medal record, Biles leaped up from her seat with a broad smile and punched the air.

"I was really excited. I

thought it was going to be at least a 14.8, 14.9, but to see 15, I was like, 'Well, that's pretty crazy,' so I was very proud," she said.

China took silver and bronze with Liu Tingting on 14.433 and Li Shijia on 14.3, respectively.

Biles won the floor exercise by a full point, scoring 15.133 despite a step out of bounds on one pass, and blew kisses to the audience after finishing her routine. Her U.S. teammate Lee won silver, her third medal of the championships, while Angelina Melnikova took bronze for Russia. Biles' winning routine came after a long wait when Brazilian gymnast Flavia Saraiva requested an inquiry into her score, during which time Biles sat on the edge of the floor.

Her earlier gold medals came in the team event Tuesday, the individual all-around Thursday and the vault Saturday.

A fifth place on uneven bars Saturday ended Biles' chances of winning a medal in all six events, which she did last year in her comeback world championships after a sabbatical in 2017.

The uneven bars are historically Biles' weakest event, though she still won a world silver in 2018, and

two-time world champion Nina Derwael of Belgium is the strongest contender to stop a gold-medal sweep by Biles and the U.S. women's team at the Olympics.

Biles hasn't confirmed whether she'll continue to compete after next year's Olympics, so this week may have been her last at the world championships. Blowing kisses to the crowd wasn't meant as a goodbye to the competition, she said.

"It's just a good floor routine, farewell to just the end of this world championship chapter here in Stuttgart," she said.

Of her 25 career world medals, 19 are gold, against 12 of 23 for Scherbo. Earlier, Russia's Nikita Nagornyy won the men's vault for his third gold medal of the championships. He's the first European man to win the vault since 2010.

Nagornyy scored an average 14.966 from his two vaults, beating his friend and Russian teammate Artur Dalaloyan into second place. The bronze went to Ukraine's Igor Radivilov.

The 38-year-old Romanian Marian Dragulescu, a four-time world champion, secured qualification for his fifth Olympics by placing fourth. □



# Facebook's Libra currency battered by defections, pushback

By **BARBARYA ORTUTAY**  
AP Technology Writer

Facebook faces a rough road ahead with Libra, but defections by high-profile partners are still unlikely to spell the end for the digital currency.

On Friday, Visa and MasterCard announced their departures from the Libra project, as did e-commerce giant eBay and payments startup Stripe. Last week, PayPal became the first major company to drop out of Libra. The exodus comes amid growing — not to mention stronger-than-anticipated — regulatory pushback against Libra in the U.S. and elsewhere.

"It's a big setback for them but it's not the end," said Gartner analyst Avivah Litan.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg will appear before Congress later this month to talk about the company's plans for Libra. Rep. Maxine Waters, the California Democrat who heads the House Financial Services Committee where Zuckerberg will testify on Oct. 23, called Libra "a new Swiss-based financial system" that potentially is too big to fail and could require a taxpayer bailout.

Libra's supporters say it could open online purchasing to millions of people who do not have access to bank accounts and could reduce the cost of sending money across borders. It's easy to see how attractive an alternative like Libra could be to people in countries beset with hyperinflation, such as Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

But Facebook already faces scrutiny over its poor record on privacy and its dominance in social media, messaging and related businesses.

Will people trust it to create a new, global currency?

Libra also poses new questions for the social network: Given that cryptocurrency is lightly regulated now, if at all, how will financial regulators oversee Facebook's plan? And just how much

## REGULATORY CHALLENGES

The financial industry is more heavily regulated than internet companies — especially in the U.S., where tech companies have of-

a letter to Facebook requesting a halt on moving forward with the currency and with the digital wallet, called Calibra, which would be used in the new currency system. House

are they going to do with that information and what are they going to put in place to safeguard that information?"

Cryptocurrencies such as Libra store all transactions on a widely distributed, encrypted ledger known as the blockchain. Libra is designed so transaction amounts are visible, but transaction participants can be anonymous — at least until they move money into real-world accounts.

Facebook said people can keep their individual transactions from appearing on the blockchain by using Calibra's wallet app, though in that case, Calibra itself would have people's data.

Calibra said it won't use financial data to target ads on Facebook. It also said it won't share financial data with Facebook, though there are exceptions that haven't been fully spelled out, including situations where data sharing would "keep people safe."

## IS FACEBOOK TOO BIG?

Congress, the Federal Trade Commission and the Justice Department are all looking into whether Big Tech giants such as Facebook and Google have gotten too big.

Adding another major business will make Facebook bigger — if Libra takes off as intended — but it may not raise major antitrust red flags, said New York University law professor Eleanor Fox.

"It is a grass-roots entry into a new field and can actually reflect an increase in innovation," she said.

Sarah Miller, deputy director of Open Markets Institute, which advocates against monopolies, said it was "insanity" to trust Facebook to launch a global cryptocurrency when it is already facing regulatory scrutiny around the world over data privacy.

"The FTC needs to rein in Facebook before the corporation puts our financial information and currency systems at risk, too," she said. □



In this April 11, 2018 file photo, Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg testifies before a House Energy and Commerce hearing on Capitol Hill in Washington.

Associated Press

more personal data will this give the social media giant, anyway?

Litan said Facebook can still easily launch Libra in countries with no pushback, of which there are plenty. She also dismissed the idea that Facebook needs partner companies such as MasterCard or Visa in order to keep Libra afloat.

"The only reason they want the companies is because it looks good," she said. "It was never a democratic blockchain. It was always run by Facebook and a couple of financial companies that were going along for the ride."

Now, those are just not going on the ride.

"You have to remember, this is the blockchain. This is the internet. It's pretty much unstoppable," she added.

ten been given free rein. Companies creating Libra are in for a "rude awakening" if they expect the same model of light regulation, said Karen Shaw Petrou, managing partner of Federal Financial Analytics in Washington.

She expects Libra will fall under U.S. regulations adopted in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis. Which agency will oversee the venture will depend on what the currency system does, she said.

In the U.S., the head of the House Financial Services Committee wants Facebook to suspend plans for a new currency until Congress and regulators are able to study it more closely.

In July, Waters and other committee Democrats sent

Democrats also have threatened legislation that would block big tech companies from getting into banking.

One hurdle Facebook and its partners will face is the potential for criminals to use it for money laundering and fraud, given the pseudo-anonymous nature of Libra and other digital currencies.

Facebook said it will comply with all existing financial regulations.

## PRIVACY PUSHBACK

Facebook has been dogged with questions about users' personal data, especially since the Cambridge Analytica scandal hit last year.

That appears to be part of the reason Facebook created a nonprofit oversight association to govern Libra. It also created a subsidiary, Calibra, to work on the technology, separately from its main social media business.

Still, Facebook is "going to get access to a lot of financial data," Forrester analyst Aurelie L'Hostis said. "What





## Liz Weston: Wake up to the truth about 'dream schools'

By LIZ WESTON  
NerdWallet  
Associated Press

The college admissions scandal — which recently led to a 14-day prison sentence for actress Felicity Huffman — exposed a group of wealthy parents' obsession with getting their kids into the "right" school. Prosecutors say the families paid bribes, faked test results and pretended their kids were athletes to get them into selective colleges.

Unfortunately, many less affluent families also fall for the delusion that some schools offer golden tickets for their children's futures, says Lynn O'Shaughnessy, author of "The College Solution." Whether it's an Ivy League college or a high-priced "dream school," too many people believe certain educations are worth endless effort, stress — and debt.

"Because somehow these are magical schools," O'Shaughnessy says, describing the fantasy. "If your child gets in, their lives will be paved with gold."

In reality, the colleges your kids attend matter far less than the majors they choose, and multiple studies have shown elite schools don't offer any extra payoff for most graduates. Inflated expectations can even lead to worse



This April 2017, file photo provided by NerdWallet shows Liz Weston, a columnist for personal finance website NerdWallet.com.

Associated Press

outcomes, including higher dropout rates.

Here are the most important facts to know as you navigate the college admissions process and decide how much to spend.

### **MOST COLLEGES ACCEPT MOST APPLICANTS**

The frenzy around college admission — and the notion that it's hard to get into a "good" school — focuses mostly on deeply flawed ratings systems and a handful of institutions that admit a fraction of their applicants, such as those involved in the college admissions scandal: Stanford University, which accepted less than 5% of applicants

last year, Yale University (6, University of Southern California (11%) and Georgetown University (14%).

Looking at 2017 data, Pew Research Center counted just 46 schools with admission rates under 20%. Only 17 schools had single-digit admission rates. By contrast, 80% of the 1,364 colleges and universities Pew studied admitted half or more of those who applied. And 53% admitted at least two-thirds of their applicants.

Kids who don't get into one of the 46 highly selective schools typically have plenty of other good options.

### **SELECTIVE DOESN'T MEAN BETTER OUTCOMES**

Elite schools don't produce happier or more successful people. A 2014 study of

nearly 30,000 college graduates found no correlation between a college's admissions rate and future job satisfaction or well-being. Earlier studies by the late Alan Krueger of Princeton and Stacy Dale at Mathematica Policy Research found students who were admitted to highly selective colleges but who attended schools elsewhere usually did just as well financially.

Elite schools did increase incomes significantly for black, Hispanic and low-income students, and those whose parents didn't graduate from college, Krueger and Dale found. Another group of researchers, however, discovered that highly selective schools didn't have a lock on helping disadvantaged students. Many of the schools that increased opportunities the most for low-income students were much lower cost public universities such as the California State University and City University of New York systems.

### **MAJORS MATTER MOST**

Parents mistakenly believe brand-name schools impress employers and lead to more opportunities. Researcher Paul Hill, who analyzed millions of admissions and salary records for student loan lenders, didn't find that to be true. Consistently, a graduate's major had a far bigger impact, says Hill, president of Job Search Intelligence in Los Angeles.

"A kid with a degree in

cybersecurity is going to come in at three times the salary of someone who graduated from Harvard with a soft degree, you know, liberal arts, humanities, whatever," says Hill, who also heads the nonprofit Educate to Career, which offers college admission and outcome data to families. "The skill-set is what matters, not the name (of the school) on the diploma."

### **'REACH' SCHOOLS CAN BE RISKY**

Counselors and parents often encourage seniors to apply to "reach" schools, colleges where a student's test scores, class rank, grades or other qualifications are below the school's average. The idea is that even though the odds are against admission, students might get lucky.

Getting into one of these schools may not be a blessing, however. Hill found that students in the bottom 25% of those admitted typically get less generous financial aid packages and are more likely to drop out or flunk out. At most colleges, he says, scrambling for a place at a school that doesn't really want your kid can backfire into a higher bill and a discouraged student.

"Parents get fixated on getting their kid into the best school possible," Hill says. "They're setting themselves up for frustration." □

## Fed plans more Treasury purchases to control lending rates

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER  
Associated Press

**WASHINGTON (AP)** — The Federal Reserve says it will buy roughly \$60 billion a month in Treasury bills through mid-2020 to inject cash into the banking system and make it easier to control overnight lending rates.

The action marks the Fed's latest response to a shortage of cash reserves that developed last month and caused short-term interest rates to spike, sending the Fed's benchmark rate

above its target range.

The Fed also says it will extend a separate short-term lending operation through January that is also intended to boost bank reserves and guard against a short-fall.

Chairman Jerome Powell has said these Treasury purchases aren't intended to stimulate the economy. On Friday, the Fed said its purchases are "technical" and "should not have any meaningful effects on... the overall level of economic activity." □

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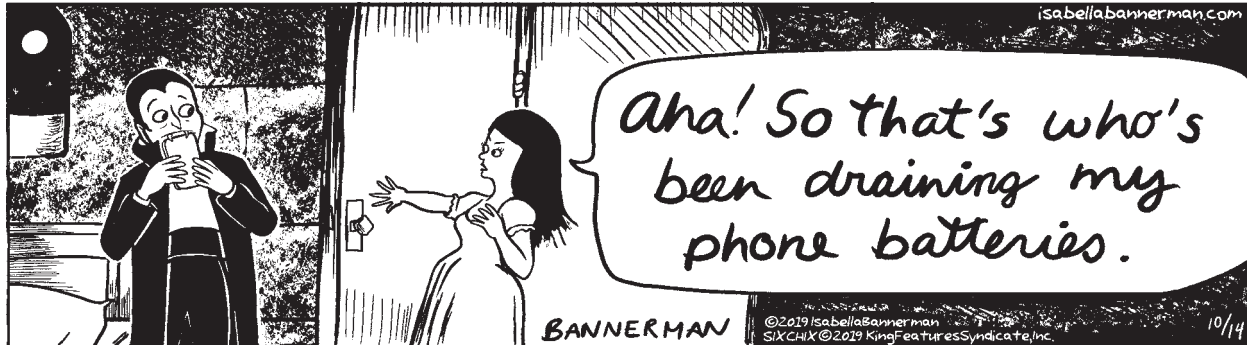
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## Mutts



## 6 Chix



## Blondie



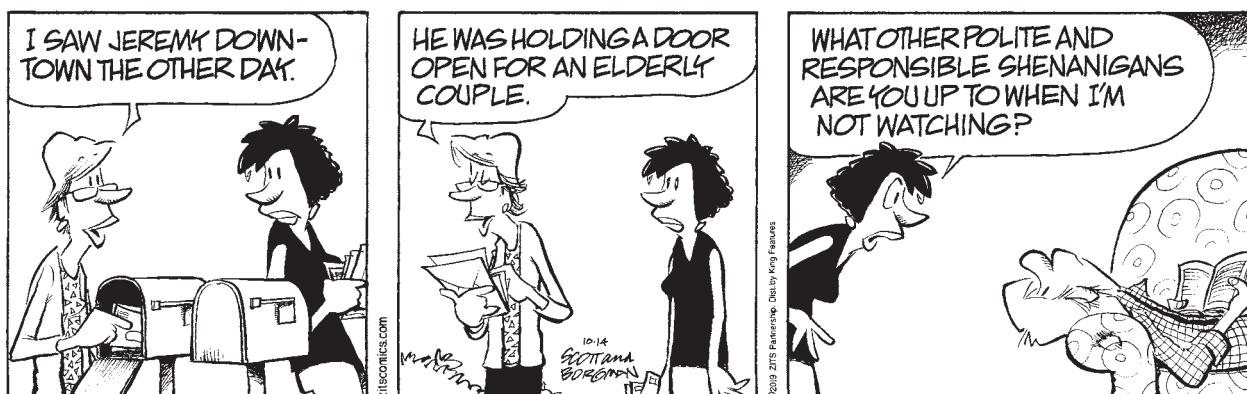
## Mother Goose & Grimm



## Baby Blues



## Zits



## Conceptis Sudoku

4		2			5			8
3	6		9	4			2	
	1				8			
7	8	9			3		6	1
				1				
5	4		8			9	7	3
			6				8	
	2			3	7		5	9
6			5			3		4

Difficulty Level ★

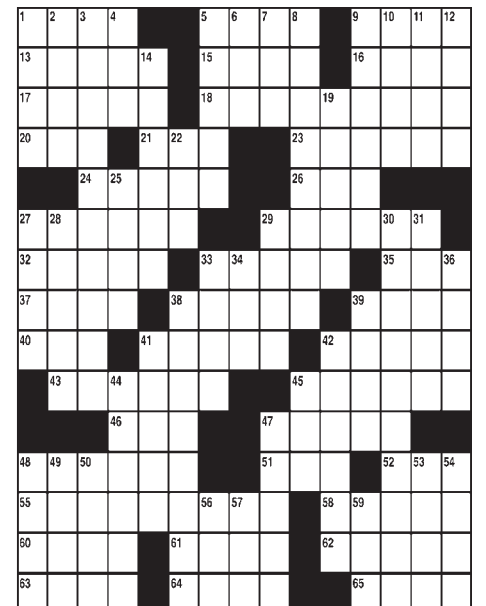
10/14

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Saturday's puzzle answer	1	9	7	2	8	6	4	5	3
	3	8	2	5	4	9	6	1	7
	6	5	4	1	7	3	9	8	2
	5	6	1	9	3	8	2	7	4
	4	2	9	6	5	7	8	3	1
	7	3	8	4	2	1	5	9	6
	9	7	3	8	6	4	1	2	5
	8	4	5	3	1	2	7	6	9
	2	1	6	7	9	5	3	4	8

**ACROSS**

- 1 Gush forth  
5 Lacking  
manners  
9 Pain in the neck  
13 Hired vehicles  
15 \_\_\_\_-and-shut case  
16 Titicaca or Tahoe  
17 Once more  
18 Lunch spot  
20 Affirmative  
21 Furniture wood  
23 Kingdoms  
24 Revere &  
Newman  
26 Car fuel  
27 Candle shop  
delights  
29 Opposite of  
roundabout  
32 Sela and her  
family  
33 Nuts  
35 "Rumor \_\_\_\_ It...",  
Jennifer Aniston  
film  
37 "Queen for \_\_\_\_" of  
old TV  
38 See eye \_\_\_\_;



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

10/14/19

## Saturday's Puzzle Solved

N	O	W		T	E	R	I	S		S	L	A	M	
B	I	A	S		E	A	U	D	E		P	U	R	E
A	L	S	O		S	T	I	L	E		L	A	T	E
	S	H	O	R	T	E	N	E	D		A	U	S	T
		N	E	E	R			L	I	S				
A	S	C	E	N	D		A	M	E	T	H	Y	S	T
S	T	A	R	T		C	R	A	S	S		A	P	R
H	O	P	S		R	O	M	P	S		B	R	I	E
E	A	R		S	O	L	O	S		P	A	D	R	E
S	T	I	C	K	L	E	R		R	I	N	S	E	D
		H	A	L			B	E	T	A				
C	O	D	A		O	C	C	U	P	A	N	T	S	
A	L	A	I		V	O	L	G	A		A	I	L	S
R	E	D	S		E	M	I	L	Y		S	C	A	T
L	O	S	E		R	O	P	E	S		S	P	Y	

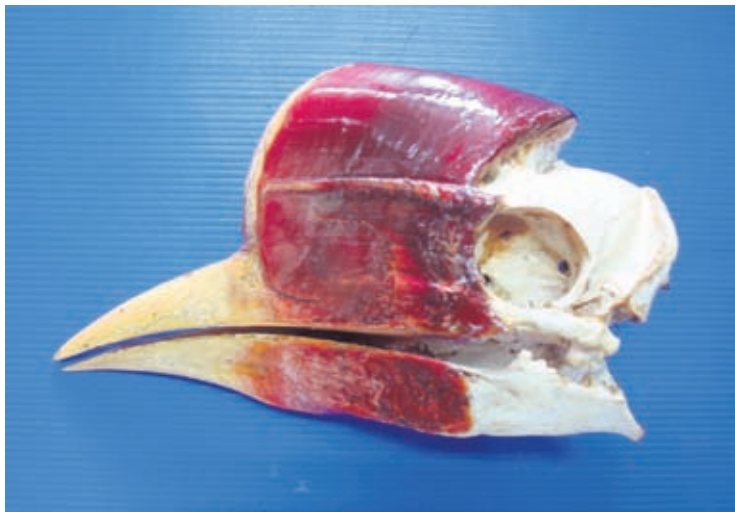
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10/14/19

- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| 39 First, second,<br>third or home          | 3 Try the patience<br>of         |
| 40 Hair bonnet                              | 4 Nintendo video<br>game console |
| 41 Strong ties                              | 5 Boulders                       |
| 42 Terra-___; patio<br>pot clay             | 6 "___ Lazy River"               |
| 43 Male voices                              | 7 ABC followers                  |
| 45 Pieces of<br>dinnerware                  | 8 Invigorate                     |
| 46 Breather's need                          | 9 Polite person's<br>word        |
| 47 Antlered animal                          | 10 British noble                 |
| 48 Husband or wife                          | 11 ___ milk; nonfat<br>drink     |
| 51 Tenement bldg.<br>unit                   | 12 Leoni & others                |
| 52 Winnebagos &<br>Airstreams, for<br>short | 14 Pigs' noses                   |
| 55 Friendly                                 | 19 Emotional                     |
| 58 Usual practice                           | 22 Jolson & Roker                |
| 60 Curved beam<br>overhead                  | 25 Williams or<br>Warhol         |
| 61 "Who Wants ___ a<br>Millionaire"         | 27 Waterbird                     |
| 62 Uneven                                   | 28 West Point<br>student         |
| 63 Track-and-field<br>event                 | 29 Doris & Dennis                |
| 64 Takes to court                           | 30 Motormouth                    |
| 65 Reason to study                          | 31 1 of the 5 senses             |
|   | 33 Swindles                      |
|   | 34 Blushing                      |
|   | 36 Coral & Yellow                |
|   | 38 Violent streams<br>of water   |
| <b>DOWN</b>                                 | 39 Dangerous<br>critters         |
| 1 Stick around                              |                                  |
| 2 Book leaf                                 |                                  |

- |                             |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 41 U.S. state capital       | 50 "___ upon a time..."  |
| 42 Provide with attire      | 53 Passport stamp        |
| 44 AI for ___; in vain      | 54 Part of a wineglass   |
| 45 Family member            | 56 Debtor's note         |
| 47 Fellows                  | 57 Presidential nickname |
| 48 Ponzi scheme             | 59 "You ___ My Sunshine" |
| 49 ___ over; study intently |                          |





In this photo taken in 2012, a skull of an endangered helmeted hornbill is displayed in Bangkok, Thailand.

Associated Press

## Better protection sought for Thailand's helmeted hornbill

By **BUSABA SIVASOMBOON**  
Associated Press

**BANGKOK (AP)** — Time is running out for Thailand's dwindling population of helmeted hornbills thanks to poaching of the exotic birds for the ivory-like casques atop their big red and yellow beaks.

The species, known by the scientific name *Rhinoplax vigil*, is listed as "critically endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. "Currently, there are fewer than 100 of the birds in Thailand's forests," says Dr. Kaset Suta-cha, chairman of the Bird Conservation Society of Thailand and head of the Exotic Pet and Wildlife Clinic at Kasetsart University's Faculty of Veterinary Medicine in Bangkok. "Critically endangered" is just a step away from "extinct in the wild" and two steps from

becoming considered "extinct." Demand from China is helping drive demand for their distinctive casques, "helmets" in French, which males deploy in battle. The material is used to make rings, pendants and other decorative items. Worries over the species' survival intensified after the wildlife trade monitoring group TRAFFIC recently posted photos online of dozens of skulls of the endangered avian for sale. A campaign on the change.org online petition site is pressuring the government to add the bird to Thailand's Wildlife Preservation List as soon as possible. It now lists 19 other species. The bird is already on Thailand's official list of protected animals, but would get much better protection if it's included in the Wildlife Preservation List, Kaset said. □

# Classifieds

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Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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### CRUISES



#### October 16

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# Who says you can't eat red meat? Food advice questioned anew

By **CANDICE CHOI**

**AP Food & Health Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP)** — So is red meat good or bad for you? If the answer were only that simple.

A team of international researchers recently rattled the nutrition world by saying there isn't enough evidence to tell people to cut back on red or processed meat, seemingly contradicting advice from prominent health experts and groups including the American Cancer Society and American Heart Association.

But the researchers didn't say people should eat more meat, or that it's healthy. No new studies were conducted, and they reported no new understanding of meat's effects on the body. Instead, the papers offer a new approach to giving advice about food and health — and a rebuke to how it's often done.

The dispute lays bare problems with nutrition research long acknowledged in the scientific world: Nutrition studies are almost never conclusive, and whatever supposed risk and benefits there are to any food are often oversimplified.

"People like bumper sticker guidance," said Dr. Walter Willett, a professor of nutrition at Harvard who has led studies tying meat to bad health.

Now health experts are wrestling with how solid scientific findings should be before guidance is issued, how to address biases that might skew conclusions and whether the pleasure we get from eating should be considered.

The scrutiny is likely to spill over to other dietary advice as obesity becomes an ever more critical public health concern, and peo-



In this Jan. 18, 2010 file photo, steaks and other beef products are displayed for sale at a grocery store in McLean, Va.

ple become increasingly frustrated with flip-flopping messages.

## MEAT TWO WAYS

The papers analyzed past studies on red and processed meat and generally corroborated the links to cancers, heart disease and other bad health outcomes. But they said the chance of any benefit from eating less of them appeared small or negligible.

For every 1,000 people, for instance, cutting back on red meat by three servings a week was linked to seven fewer deaths from cancer. For some other health measures, like strokes, the difference was smaller or nonexistent.

What's more, the researchers said there's little certainty meat was the reason for the differences.

Uncertainty is common in nutrition research. Many studies about food and health are based on links researchers make between people's health and what they say they eat. But that doesn't prove one causes the other. If a thin person loves cereal and eats it nearly every day, for instance, that doesn't

mean cereal is the reason they're thin.

Health experts who defend advice to cut back meat say the researchers were applying an unreasonable standard — evaluating the strength of the meat studies with a method intended for medical studies, where a specific dose of drug can be tested under controlled conditions.

With nutrition, they say it's impossible to conduct studies where people's diets and lifestyles are controlled and monitored over long periods. They say the statistical signals they see in nutrition studies are meaningful, and that people should be given guidance on the best available data.

## THE PERSON VS. THE POPULATION

If it's true that there would be seven fewer cancer deaths for every 1,000 people who cut back on red meat, then it is also true that 993 of those people would not see that benefit even if they ate fewer burgers.

For many public health experts, the potential for those seven fewer deaths is worth making a broad recommendation to limit meat. Across an entire population, the numbers could add up to many lives saved.

But the question is where to draw the line, and at what point the potential benefit is too small and uncertain to ask people to change their behavior.

The authors also argue the individual being asked to change their behavior

should be considered. For those who regularly eat and enjoy meat, cutting back on it may seem drastic if all they are getting in return is small reduction in risk, if any at all.

"Recommendations should consider the values and preferences of people who actually bear the consequences," said Bradley Johnston, lead author of the papers, who specializes in research methodologies.

## TILTING THE EVIDENCE

Given the uncertainties of nutrition science, another long-running concern is the potential for findings to be skewed by personal beliefs or financial incentives.

The latest papers were no exception, with critics and supporters each pointing to factors that could have influenced the others' position.

Critics noted Johnston, the lead author, undermined another dietary recommendation in the past. He previously led a study funded by the food industry that challenged guidelines to limit added sugars, which serves the interests of many food companies. That paper initially said the authors independently wrote the plan for the study. After emails obtained by the Associated Press showed the industry group sent "requested revisions," the paper was corrected to say the group reviewed and approved the plan.

Johnston and supporters of the papers countered, saying critics have long advised people to limit meat

and could feel the need to defend their position.

The back-and-forth underscores the difficulty of ruling out the biases any researcher is likely to have, given the amount of industry money in nutrition research and the strong beliefs people often have about food.

Meat is an especially polarizing topic, given the animal welfare and environmental consequences that come with it.

That could further confuse people about who or what to believe, or they just focus on research that backs up what they want to believe.

## LOST IN TRANSLATION

Wherever researchers stand on meat, there's agreement that the nuances of nutrition science often get lost in translation. Foods are often labeled as good or bad, even when researchers try to be nuanced.

Take red meat. The advice to "limit" it often doesn't specify by how much, which could lead people to think cutting back is good regardless of the context. But in poorer countries, red meat might help improve diets. In richer countries, Willett said the benefits of cutting back would vary depending on what replaces it, and that pizza might not be an improvement.

Still, Willett and others who criticized last week's papers say the many Americans who eat red meat once a day or more could benefit from eating less.

There's no consistent recommendation for an acceptable amount. The American Cancer Society's experts say "a few" servings a week or less.

A study by Willett, which also addressed the environmental impact of food, advised a limit of one serving a week.

Public health experts want to give people advice that's easy to communicate. But most acknowledge that doing a better job of conveying nuances and uncertainties could help prevent mistrust and confusion. □



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**Marlon James, Laili Lalami are National Book Award nominees**

By HILLEL ITALIE  
Associated Press

**NEW YORK (AP)** — Marlon James fantasy novel "Black Leopard, Red Wolf," Laili Lalami's immigrant tale "The Other Americans" and Jason Reynolds' neighborhood story "Look Both Ways" are among this year's finalists for the 70th annual National Book Awards. Nominees announced Tuesday also include Albert Woodfox, the former prison inmate who spent more than 40 years in solitary confinement in the Louisiana State Penitentiary before his murder conviction was overturned and he was released, in 2016. His memoir "Solitary," written with Leslie George, is a finalist for nonfiction. Five nominees were announced in each of five categories, ranging from fiction to translation to young people's literature. None of the finalists has ever won a competitive National Book Award and only four have received



This combination photo of book cover images shows, from left, "Look Both Ways: A Tale Told in Ten Blocks," by Jason Reynolds, "Disappearing Earth," by Julia Phillips, "Sabrina & Corina," by Kali Fajardo-Anstine, "The Other Americans," by Laili Lalami, and "Black Leopard, Red Wolf" by Marlon James.

any kind of recognition, including poetry nominee Toi Derricotte, a recipient of an honorary National Book Award in 2016 for co-founding the poetry center Cave Canem. This year's winners will be announced Nov. 20 at a benefit dinner in New York City, with LeVar Burton serving as host and honorary prizes going to author Edmund White and to Oren Teicher, CEO of the American Booksellers Association. The awards are presented by the National Book Foundation. Winners

in the competitive categories each receive \$10,000. James and Lalami were chosen for fiction, along with Susan Choi's "Trust Exercise," Kali Fajardo-Anstine's "Sabrina & Corina" and Julia Phillips' "Disappearing Earth." In nonfiction, nominees besides Woodfox were Sarah M. Broom's "The Yellow House," Tressie McMillan Cottom's "Thick: And Other Essays," Carolyn Forché's "What You Have Heard is True: A Memoir of Witness and Resistance" and David Treuer's "The

Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present." The translation nominees were Khaled Khalifa's "Death Is Hard Work" (translated from the Arabic by Leri Price), László Krasznahorkai's "Baron Wenckheim's Homecoming" (translated from the Hungarian by Otilie Mulzet), Scholastique Mukasonga's "The Barefoot Woman" (translated from the French by Jordan Stump), Yoko Ogawa's "The Memory Police" (translated from the Japanese by Ste-

phen Snyder) and Pajtim Statovci's "Crossing" (translated from the Finnish by David Hackston). In poetry, finalists besides Derricotte's "I: New and Selected Poems" were Jericho Brown's "The Tradition," Ilya Kaminsky's "Deaf Republic," Carmen Giménez Smith's "Be Recorder" and Arthur Sze's "Sight Lines." Nominees besides Reynolds in young people's literature were Akwaeke Emezi's "Pet," Randy Ribay's "Patron Saints of Nothing," Laura Ruby's "Thirteen Doorways, Wolves Behind Them All" and Martin W. Sandler's "1919 The Year That Changed America." Ten of the 25 nominated books, including four out of five in fiction, were released by Penguin Random House, the country's largest publisher. Another 10 came from university and independent presses. The finalists were voted on by judging panels of authors, critics and others in the literary community. □

Associated Press



## 'Joker' tops box office again, beats 'Addams Family'

**Associated Press**



## Jennifer Aniston, Mariah Carey honored at women's event



Jennifer Aniston arrives at Variety's Power of Women on Friday, Oct. 11, 2019, at the Beverly Wilshire hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif.  
Associated Press

By LINDSEY BAHR  
Associated Press

**BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)** — Jennifer Aniston, Ellen DeGeneres, Awkwafina and more stars overcame a dysfunctional teleprompter to toast one another and their charities at a women's luncheon Friday in Beverly Hills. "I'm fine but Jen (Aniston) is freaking it back there," DeGeneres said as harried staff struggled to fix the broken screens that just a few minutes earlier had Awkwafina nervously winging it ("I can do a little tech support," she offered) before calling someone to just bring up her phone so she could read her speech manually. But there's nothing like a few comedians to handle technological issues with grace and humor. Both had the crowd in stitches despite the minor chaos happening around them.

The 11th annual Variety Power of Women luncheon honoring Aniston, Awkwafina, Chaka Khan, Mariah Carey, Brie Larson and Disney Television Studios chairman Dana Walden boasted a roster of A-list guests and presenters from DeGeneres, to Natalie Portman and Ryan Murphy who charmed and inspired the well-heeled crowd of entertainers and industry insiders with speeches about their charitable causes and their commitment to empowering women in the industry. Aniston was introduced by DeGeneres, who kept things light and didn't mention the recent social media uproar around her friendship with George W. Bush. "What an honor it is for Jen Aniston to receive this from me," DeGeneres said. "In a world where people are angry and mean she is one of the nicest people I've ever met." Aniston wiped tears away as she recalled meeting a young girl fighting cancer at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. "Every child deserves to know that they are seen and heard," she said, remembering a time when an adult told her, at 11, that she didn't have anything interesting to say. She said she carried that sentence with her into adulthood and often finds herself feeling like that 11-year-old at dinners.

"The Morning Show" star said her "Friends" mom Marlo Thomas introduced her to the hospital, which she has been working with for 25 years. And she said the last

two years in the industry, following the rise of #MeToo, has made her think a lot about the messages "we send" young kids and girls. "The things we say and do can either build them up or tear them down and make them feel like maybe their voices don't matter," Aniston said. She admitted that she never, "Actually thought about myself as powerful. Strong, yes, but not powerful...It's a distinction I've actually been thinking about a lot lately because that word 'power' and its counterpart, 'abuse of power,' keeps coming up in light of what is happening in our country and in our industry — a rebalancing of the scales." Aniston's speech wasn't the only to touch on cancer. Ryan Murphy, who credited Walden with giving him a chance in television when no one else would, also thanked the Disney executive for being there when he found out his 18-month-old son had a tumor a few years ago. Walden has worked with the UCLA Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center since her own mother was diagnosed a decade ago. Justice and empowerment were also on the minds of Carey, who spoke about how her own experiences at a performing arts camp helped inspire her to begin Camp Mariah 25 years ago, and Larson, who ceded part of her speech to Equal Justice Initiative operations director Eva Ansley, the woman she plays in the upcoming movie "Just Mercy," about the advocacy organization's founding.

The event, which was put on with the help of presenters like Lifetime and sponsors like Audi, was tamer than in years past when celebrities used their platforms to talk about everything from politics and the patriarchy to Harvey Weinstein. But Carey managed to throw in a little spice of her own in remembering how she had to learn how to gain control over her career over the men who wanted to dictate what she wore and who she worked with when she was just starting out.

"I want to thank each woman in this room and all the women who have come forward with their truths, their harrowing experiences, and above all their triumphs over the misogynistic society of corporate (expletives) that we deal with every day," she said. □



This cover image released by Thirty Tigers shows "Almost Daylight," a release by Chris Knight.

Associated Press

## Chris Knight snarls out an album that fits the times

By SCOTT STROUD  
Associated Press

Chris Knight, "Almost Daylight" (Thirty Tigers)  
In his first release in more than seven years, Kentucky-born country rocker Chris Knight has snarled out an album that's gruff, uncompromising and perfect for the times. "Almost Daylight" rails against hardship, misfortune and phoniness, set against a musical backdrop that's built around Knight's charmingly marble-mouthed singing style and the jagged-edged electric guitar swagger of Dan Baird and Chris Clark. Long known for his visual, earthy songwriting, Knight has matured from his days as a rebel in the tradition of John Prine and Steve Earle. But his music remains grounded in his deep Kentucky roots, so much so that he can plausibly rhyme "rich" with "catch," as he does on "Send It On Down."

Country great Lee Ann Womack lends background vocals to that one, and Prine himself chimes in on the raucous closer, "Mexican Home" — both signs of the respect Knight commands among Nashville songwriting royalty. "Sometimes hope sinks like a stone," he sings on "Go On." "Keep your head up, keep your head up, keep your head up and go on." It's not happy music exactly. But it's the sort of striving that makes Knight, once again, an important voice for our times. □



# Gag! Rotting fish, maggots on menu at Disgusting Food Museum

By **ALEKSANDAR LJUBOJEVIC** and **VANESSA GERA**  
Associated Press

**MALMO, Sweden (AP)** — Sheep eyeball juice. Bull testicles. Maggot-infested cheese. American root beer.

These are among the items considered palatable or even regarded as delicacies in some cultures that the Disgusting Food Museum in Malmo, Sweden is serving up.

The temporary museum, which opened Wednesday, clearly braced for revolted visitors to gag at the foods on display, most of which can be smelled or tasted. Tickets came in the form of vomit bags.

Curator Samuel West said the exhibition is meant to entertain, but also to convey a thought-provoking message: what is considered appetizing or repulsive is learned and can change. He hopes visitors will be encouraged to try more sustainable food products that are being developed or marketed, like insects and lab-grown meat.

"Disgust is one of the six fundamental human emotions, and the evolutionary function of disgust is to help us to avoid foods that might be dangerous, that are contaminated, toxic, gone off," West said.

"Disgust is hardwired as an emotion but what we find disgusting is culturally learned."

The idea of exploring gross food came to him with awareness that the "single most impactful way we can impact the environment is by eating less meat," he said.

"It's an exhibition that asks visitors to challenge their notions of what is disgusting and what is delicious, and the aim is to get people to understand there is no objective measure of disgust," West said. "For some, the revelation might be that 'maybe insects aren't as disgusting as I thought.'"

The 80 food items in the museum's exhibit include a bull's penis, frog smoothies from Peru, a wine made of baby mice that is con-



In this photo taken on Sept. 22, 2018 a container of Mice wine on display at the Disgusting Food Museum, in Malmo, Sweden. Baby mice are drowned and brewed in rice wine and the brew is matured for up to a year before drinking.

Associated Press

sumed in China and Korea, and Sweden's "surstromming," an infamously putrid fermented herring.

Visitors are also introduced to "balut," partially developed duck fetuses that are boiled inside the egg and eaten straight from the shell in the Philippines, as well as

"casu marzu," a Sardinian pecorino cheese infested by maggots.

Also included are items many Western visitors might not consider disgusting at all. Swedish visitors are surprised to find salty licorice, popular in Sweden but perceived as disgusting to

many others.

American foods on display include Jell-O salad, made of gelatin and typically fruit; canned pork brains with milk gravy; and root beer, a sweet soft drink which Swedes say tastes like toothpaste.

"I think that by turning the



In this photo taken on Sept. 22, 2018 a bowl of Natto a traditional Japanese food made from soybeans fermented with *Bacillus subtilis* var, on display at the Disgusting Food Museum, in Malmo, Sweden.

Associated Press

lens onto ourselves, on Swedish or American food culture, we are saying, 'We treat everyone the same,'" West said.

West said he has managed only to sample about half of the more exotic collected consumables. Asked if he ever vomited while preparing the exhibition, he said, "Every day."

Some of the delicacies are so smelly they are kept in glass jars. At a museum preview last week, people took tentative sniffs of the displays before recoiling with grimaces.

"Real food in the museum setting can be a problem," said Andreas Ahrens, museum director and curator. "You have to change things pretty regularly. You have to make sure that it doesn't start to rot."

Or as West put it: "You can't leave bull testicles out for too long."

West, a clinical psychologist and researcher from California, was also the creator of the Museum of Failure, a successful showcase of products that failed with consumers. It also opened in Sweden and will be shown soon in Shanghai.

Hakan Jonsson, a Lund University ethnology professor who helped with research for the exhibition, said notions of what people find delicious and disgusting are already changing.

"A lot of big groups in (the) Western world are all of a sudden thinking 'Meat has become disgusting, something that I could never put into my mouth,'" he said. "And that is something quite new in the history here, where something considered as being normal, and prestigious, being the thing that you were aiming for Sunday, and all of a sudden that had become a matter of disgust for many people."

The Disgusting Food Museum is scheduled to run until Jan. 27, 2019, at the Slagthuset MMX in Malmo.

Museum organizers said the museum shop offers a selection of "unusual" drinks and snacks and promise a restaurant operating in the building is "not disgusting." □